Workers pay more taxes than millionaires

STORY ON PAGE A2

Margie slams PAL

DI SILA MAALAGA SA PASAHERO! PATI BEAUTY KO INISNAB!

By Rocky Nazareno

WHAT universe is Philippine Airlines in? Apparently not in the same one Margie Moran Floirendo lives in.

The last Filipina to win the Miss Universe beauty pageant

MARGIE/A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

US aid belittled as 'consuelo de bobo'

By Christine Avendaño and Gerald Lacuarta

A "*CONSUELO de bobo*" (small consolation) for the administration.

This was how Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo described the visit of US Secretary of State Colin Powell to Manila.

US/A21

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Monday, August 5, 2002 ★ 68 pages / 4 sections / vol.17 / no. 238 P15 website: www.inq7.net

12 robbers, 7 Abus fall

Police, military on a roll against criminals in Luzon, Mindanao

By Martin P. Marfil

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's "strong republic" continued to flex its muscles over the weekend, arresting 12 robbery suspects in the north and seven suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits in the south.

The 12 alleged robbers, members of the Sagada-Kalinga hold-up gang operating in Ilocos and the Cordillera Autonomous Region, were presented to the President in Malacañang yesterday. They were arrested in police raids conducted in three northern Luzon provinces over three successive days.

The Abu Sayyaf suspects were picked up by government troops after they tried to pass a military checkpoint in Indanan, Sulu, on Saturday. They did not put up a fight and were immediately placed under tactical interrogation at a military headquarters in the area, a statement from the Armed Forces read.

In her State of the Nation Address last month, the President placed the police and the military on a "war footing" against criminals, which she blamed for the country's negative image abroad. In recent weeks, she has been receiving arrested suspects in Malacañang to show she is taking a hands-on approach.

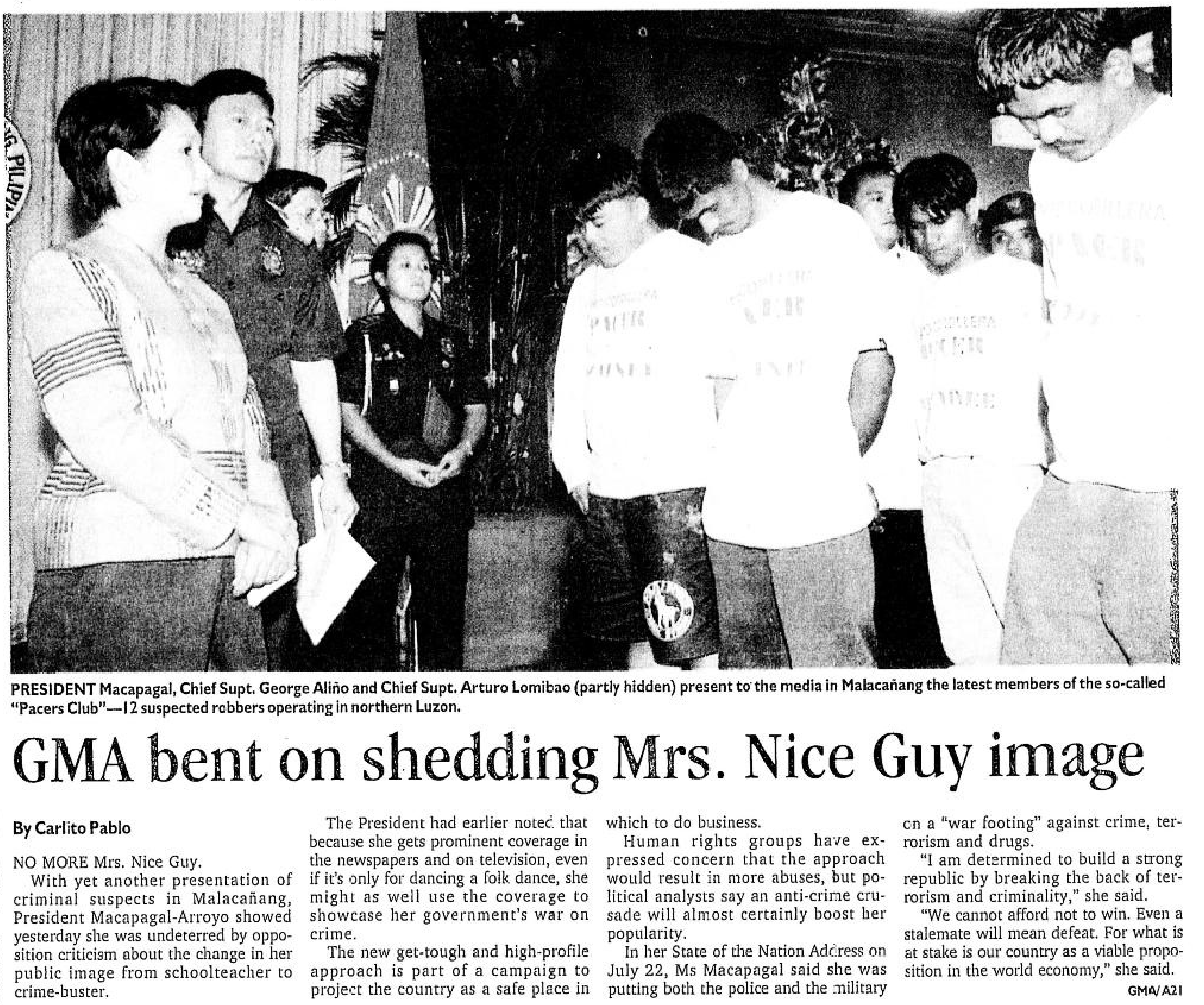
The Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response or Pacer, the newly formed elite task force, released a statement linking the gang to operations in the provinces of Cordillera, Benguet, Pangasinan and La Union.

The suspects are believed to be responsible for at least five bank robberies in Pangasinan and La Union as well as a string of robberies involving passenger buses on a major highway.

The operation against the gang started after its members robbed the Salting restaurant in Tuba, Benguet, on July 30.

After robbing the restaurant of P4,000 in cash, the gang also took cash and valuables worth P115,000 from

12 ROBBERS/A21



PRESIDENT Macapagal, Chief Supt. George Aliño and Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao (partly hidden) present to the media in Malacañang the latest members of the so-called "Pacers Club"—12 suspected robbers operating in northern Luzon.

GMA bent on shedding Mrs. Nice Guy image

By Carlito Pablo

NO MORE Mrs. Nice Guy.

With yet another presentation of criminal suspects in Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo showed yesterday she was undeterred by opposition criticism about the change in her public image from schoolteacher to crime-buster.

The President had earlier noted that because she gets prominent coverage in the newspapers and on television, even if it's only for dancing a folk dance, she might as well use the coverage to showcase her government's war on crime.

The new get-tough and high-profile approach is part of a campaign to project the country as a safe place in which to do business.

Human rights groups have expressed concern that the approach would result in more abuses, but political analysts say an anti-crime crusade will almost certainly boost her popularity.

In her State of the Nation Address on July 22, Ms Macapagal said she was putting both the police and the military on a "war footing" against crime, terrorism and drugs.

"I am determined to build a strong republic by breaking the back of terrorism and criminality," she said.

"We cannot afford not to win. Even a stalemate will mean defeat. For what is at stake is our country as a viable proposition in the world economy," she said.

GMA/A21

Palace: Bar council, not the firm, has say

By Carlito Pablo

ALTHOUGH Malacañang has sought to disabuse the widespread perception that the next Ombudsman is not a nominee of the Carpio, Villaraza & Cruz law office, talk in legal circles is that the incoming chief graft buster is either Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo or someone with the law firm's blessings.

Marcelo is a former partner in the law firm.

"The President will rely on the recommendation of the Judicial and Bar Council, which is headed by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

The perception that the Carpio, Villaraza & Cruz law office is influential is partly based on the appointments to prominent government positions of its members after President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in January 2001.

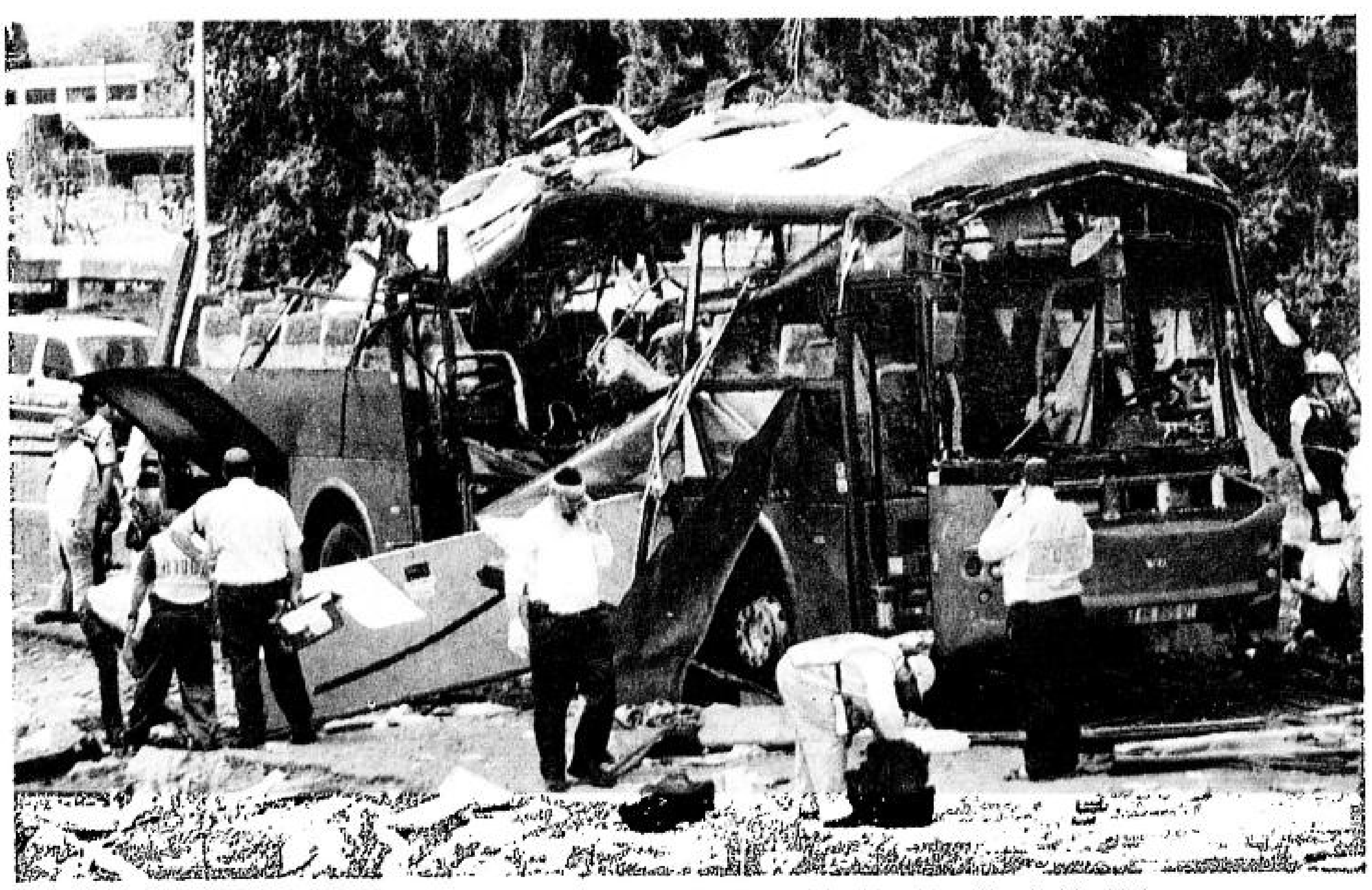
Antonio Carpio was Ms Macapagal's first nominee to the Supreme Court; Avelino Cruz was appointed chief presidential legal counsel; and Simeon Marcelo was named solicitor general.

When First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo became the subject of controversies; he chose Patricia Bunye, a member of the law firm, as his personal spokesperson.

The perception that the law firm is influential is also based on the long and deep ties the firm has had since the '80s with the families of both Arroyo

PALACE/A21

Palestinian suicide bomber kills 9 in bus



CHARRED remains were scattered across the highway after another Palestinian blew himself up inside this bus. AP

MOUNT MERON, Israel—A Palestinian suicide bomber turned a packed bus in northern Israel into a fireball on Sunday, killing at least nine people and wounding dozens.

Hours later, a Palestinian opened fire at an Israeli telephone truck in a Palestinian market in East Jerusalem in an attack in which three people, including the gunman, were killed.

The powerful blast on a Galilee country road tore gaping holes in the sides and roof of the inter-city bus crowded with civilians and soldiers returning to base during the morning rush hour at the start of the Israeli workweek.

Witnesses and rescue workers said the explosion ignited an inferno that blazed for 10 minutes before the fire brigade arrived.

"There were mangled bodies everywhere," Nissim Hozeh, a fireman, told reporters. Pieces of clothing, including Army uniforms and bags littered the ground for meters.

In a statement issued in Gaza, the militant group Hamas said it had carried out the attack in further revenge for an Israeli air raid on July 22 that

PALESTINIAN/A20

RP democracy shortfalls peril political setup

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

PHILIPPINE democracy is building up deficits in delivering economic goods and social services, and these deficits are putting at risk the viability of our political system.

The democratic shortfalls are spotlighted in the Human Development Report 2002, commissioned by the United Nations Development Program, which warns that the democratization wave of the 1980s and 1990s has stalled, with "many countries lapsing back into authoritarianism or facing rising economic and social tensions."

Of the 81 countries that embraced democracy in the 1980s and 1990s, only 47 have gone on to become fully functioning democracies, says the report. Worse, several have returned to authoritarian rule, either through military takeover, as in Burma or Pakistan, or "pseudo-democratic, as in Zimbabwe."

This reversal of the democratic wave, first heralded by Samuel Huntington, a Harvard political scientist, has provoked academic debate over the political system's capacity to deliver social and economic benefits.

The report, written by an independent body of scholars and researchers, comes in the wake of troubling events in the Philippines that have paralyzed the delivery capacity of the democratic state.

These developments include the recurrent legislative deadlock that para-

RP/A6

ANG DAYA NYO!

Second FRONT PAGE

Workers pay more taxes than millionaires

By Cynthia D. Balana

POOR workers pay more taxes than the rich.

Sen. Ralph Recto called attention to the fact yesterday, in the course of his revelation that the government had lost a total of P608 billion to individual income tax leakage for the past 11 years.

Recto cited a government-financed study showing that of the P81.8 billion in individual income tax collected in 2000, P63.8 billion were withheld from the wages of ordinary workers.

He said non-salaried individuals, mostly professionals, contributed P7.3 billion, representing only two percent of the total collection that year.

"The *masa* pays more taxes than millionaires," Recto concluded.

One reason for the anemic collection was the low tax base, he said, with only about 2.8 million income tax filers in 2000.

"There are around 15 million salaried workers in the country," Recto pointed out.

Of the returns filed that year, 1.953 million were by salaried workers, 1.350 million of them government employees. Only 536,000 returns were filed by businessmen and professionals.

Recto said the annual individual income tax evasion rate from 1990 to 2000 was 56.2 percent.

Earlier, Recto said about P610.5 billion had been lost to value-added tax (VAT) evasion from 1989 to 2000, an amount enough to finance the national government's operations for one year.

VAT is a consumption tax equivalent to 10 percent of the gross selling price or gross value of goods or services. It is supposedly paid by every individual who sells, exchanges, imports, leases goods and renders services.

In a related development, Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta welcomed Malacañang's reported plan to undertake a wide-scale revamp at the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which accounted for 80 percent of tax collections.

Oreta said the government's "frantic efforts" to prop up revenues would yield more results if the leadership of both the BIR and BOC were overhauled.

The BIR hit only 58 percent of its collection target for the first four months of the year, while the BOC earlier announced it could incur a shortfall of P9.6 billion.

Oreta said this failure had led budget officials to revise the government's growth targets and "drastically" cut expenditures this year.

Go easy on Bañez, lawmakers told

By Carlito Pablo

MALACAÑANG yesterday told lawmakers to go easy on Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Rene Bañez who has been under heavy fire for low revenue collections.

"They also have to consider the condition of the country," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye previously explained that this year's revenue targets were based on optimistic economic projections that did not materialize, hence Bañez has asked for some consideration in the review of the BIR's performance.

Bunye said that in both the private and public sectors, Bañez "is perceived to be very professional and crusading."

"In fact, talk is that he stepped on a lot of toes in his attempt to clean up the bureau," Bunye said.

Bunye did not say whether Bañez is a victim of a demolition job.

Bunye also echoed Bañez's request for his critics in the House "not to try him before the media."

'Obsolete' tax system root of shortfalls, scams

By Christine O. Avendano

A "DEFECTIVE and obsolete" tax collection system and the government's continued refusal to modify it were at the root of crippling tax shortfalls and scams.

Bataan Rep. Enrique Garcia yesterday said the situation would continue to rob the national coffers of billions in losses unless immediately remedied.

Garcia said the Department of Finance should put in place a basic Management Information System (MIS) that would reflect, as soon as possible, actual amounts collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs. The figures should be classified as "tax/duty" or "taxpayer," Garcia said.

In a statement, the solon said this "utter" lack of a basic MIS was the biggest single obstacle to efficient performance by the BIR and BOC.

"They don't know what taxes/duties have been paid and what are still collectible," Garcia said.

The MIS could be put in place at no cost, he stressed. Payments collected by banks for companies were automatically recorded as soon as the tellers received them. Garcia wondered, "Why can't BIR and BOC do this?"

Since Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho had been "steadfastly resisting" the proposal, Garcia said he asked President Macapagal in a letter last week "to intercede."

Meanwhile, Representatives Prospero Nograles and Willie Villarama urged the Makati Business Club to have the personal income tax returns of its members assessed by a prestigious auditing firm for accuracy.

"We have been accusing the BIR of corruption," Nograles said in a statement. "Now let us all submit ourselves to an audit. After all, graft is a two-way street."

Nograles also said Congress should legislate a general amnesty "that would give everyone a fresh start."

BIR sues firm for tax fraud

By Agnes E. Donato

AS if to justify the praises heaped upon it by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Thursday, the Bureau of Internal Revenue sued alleged "tax cheat" Southland Security Corp. of the Philippines that same afternoon.

Represented by revenue district officer Jonas Amora, the BIR filed the tax fraud case against Southland president Daisy Maniwang, before the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

Southland was accused of failing to declare P36 million, representing 85.88 percent of its total sales to the Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co. in 2001.

In its complaint, the BIR showed that Southland's quarterly returns for the whole of 2001 declared gross receipts amounting to around P6 million, and output VAT (value-added tax) totaling P602,640.14.

But PLDT, in its Summary List of Purchases for 2001, reported that it had bought nearly P47 million worth of security services from Southland.

The telephone company later confirmed, in a notarized certification dated July 23,2002, that its net purchase of services from Southland amounted to P42.7 million.

"The difference between the declared sales of Southland per its quarterly returns, on one hand, and its true amount of sales to PLDT, on the other, constitutes an underdeclaration of approximately 85.88 percent, and is evidence of a false or fraudulent return," the BIR said.

Substantial underdeclaration of sales in the quarterly returns is a violation of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997.

Under the law, individuals who attempt to evade or defeat tax are punishable with a fine of P30,000 to P100,000 and a prison term of two to four years.

Aside from the company president, all persons found to have contributed to the violation would be held liable by the court.

GMA urged to ban export of scrap steel

STEEL scrap collectors are urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to immediately put a stop on steel scrap exports.

They are complaining about how big Korean, Taiwanese and Malaysian steel firms have been monopolizing the buying of scrap steel in the country to the detriment of local junk dealers and local industries which use steel scrap as their raw material.

Narda Camacho, founder of Linis Ganda, an environment group involved in waste recycling, decried that "foreign steel firms are bidding up the price of steel to such ridiculous prices that local steel junk dealers and local industries cannot afford to stay longer in business."

"We have to protect the only means of livelihood of a lot of our poor countrymen and even that of the children of backyard junk shops and small foundry and ironsmith shops."

Camacho warned that unless government immediately bans the export of local strap steel, prices will soon become too high for all local steel-using industries.

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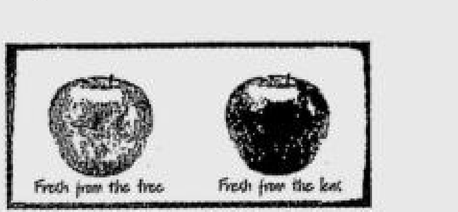

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Red fighters expand bases

By Martin P. Marfil

WHILE government forces concentrated their firepower on the Abu Sayyaf, communist rebels were quietly expanding their areas of operations in the countryside.

A military intelligence report showed that the New People's Army expanded its influence from 1,969 barangays in 2001 to 2,262 this year.

At the same time, the document revealed that the communists have increased the number of their guerilla fronts from 100 at the end of 2001 to 105 in the first six months of this year.

Of the affected barangays, 1,806 were classified as "infiltrated" while 456 were "influenced."

The figures were based on the expansion of the two estranged communist factions, the "Reaffirmists," who support Communist Party of the Philippines chair Jose Ma. Sison, and the "Rejectionists" who oppose Sison's leadership.

But despite the increases, the military document showed a decrease in the strength of the communist movement with the "Reaffirmists" figures going down from 10,238 fighters with 6,409 firearms to 9,388 and 6,149 firearms.

The "Rejectionist" faction, however, showed some gains. Its strength was pegged at 1,692 and 750 firearms in 2001 and increased to 1,706 and 763 firearms in the first six months of this year.

Overall, the communist movement decreased from 11,930 in 2001 to 11,094 this year.

The clashes between the government forces and the communist guerrillas have so far claimed the lives of 263 people this year: 98 rebels; 81 soldiers, policemen and militiamen; and 84 civilians.

Last year, the number of casualties was pegged at 577 dead: 223 rebels, 163 government men and 191 civilians.

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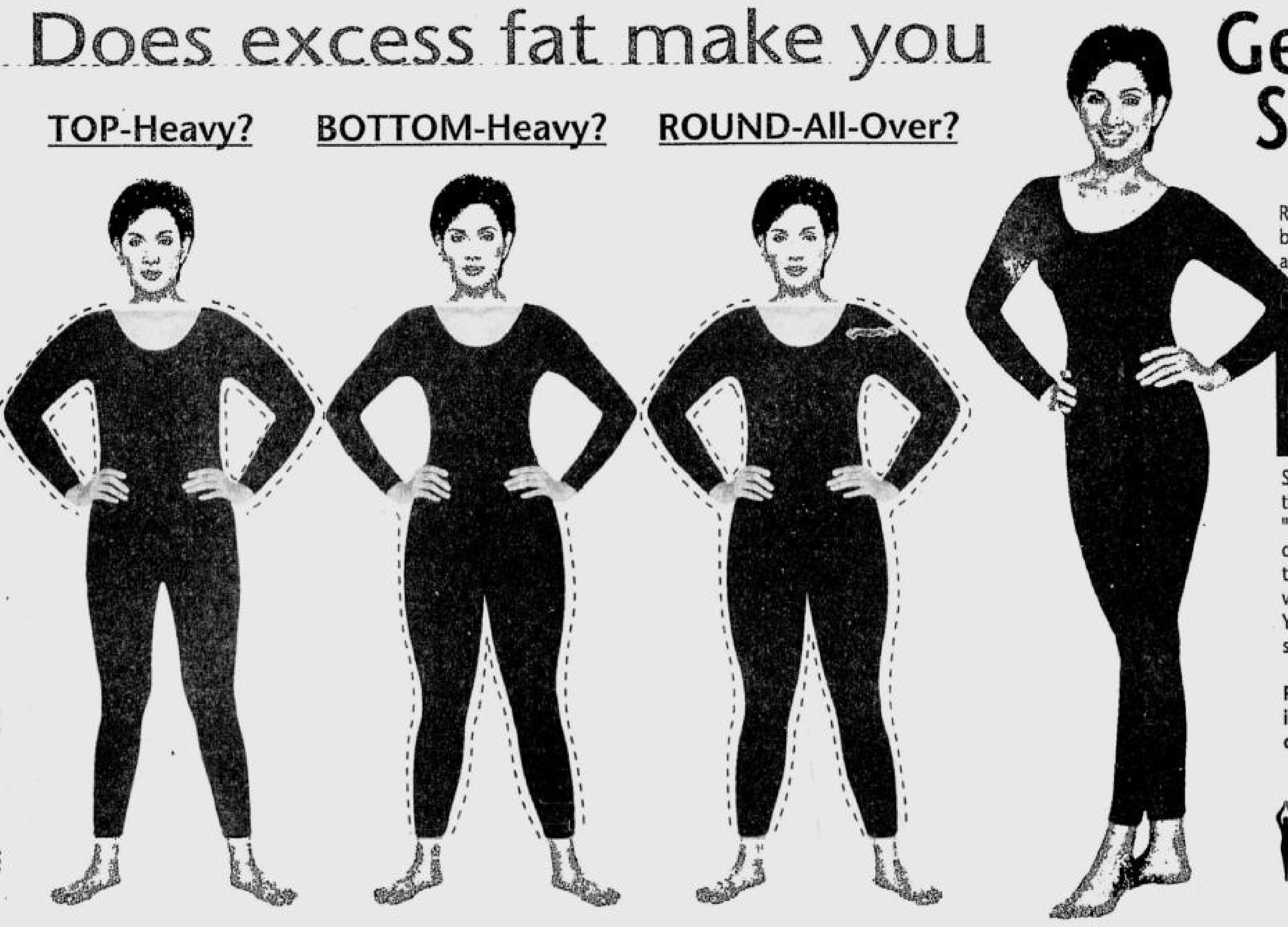

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Davao thrift bank ordered closed

DAVAO CITY—The Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas on Friday closed All Asia Bank, a thrift bank owned by Makati-based investment firm All Asia Capital and Trust Corp.

Edmundo Parreño of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) said the six-branch bank, including its head office along San Pedro Street, was ordered to close shop after the Monetary Board went over its books.

"After the examination of its bank records, the Monetary Board decided to close the bank and its branches," Parreño told the INQUIRER.

Parreño, who was assigned overall deputy receiver here, said the Monetary Board found that All Asia Bank was insolvent. He said the bank's capitalization was also found deficient.

Parreño said he could not say how much the bank owed its depositors and creditors. He said All Asia Bank had about 17,000 depositors.

"But some of these have become dormant already so we still have to ascertain how large its deposits are," Parreño said.

He said the PDIC would start examining the bank's books today. He said this could take one month.

"After that, we will notify the depositors on when and how to file their claims," he said.

All Asia Bank, the former Banco Davao owned by the family of the late congressman Lorenzo Sarmiento of Davao City, had six branches all over the Davao provinces.

It counted as clients several of Davao's large business firms as well as local branches of companies with national operations.

One of its depositors was Sun*Star Davao.

Antonio Ajero, the paper's publisher and editor in chief, said it was fortunate that their cashier was alerted by the arrival of people from the PDIC on Friday.

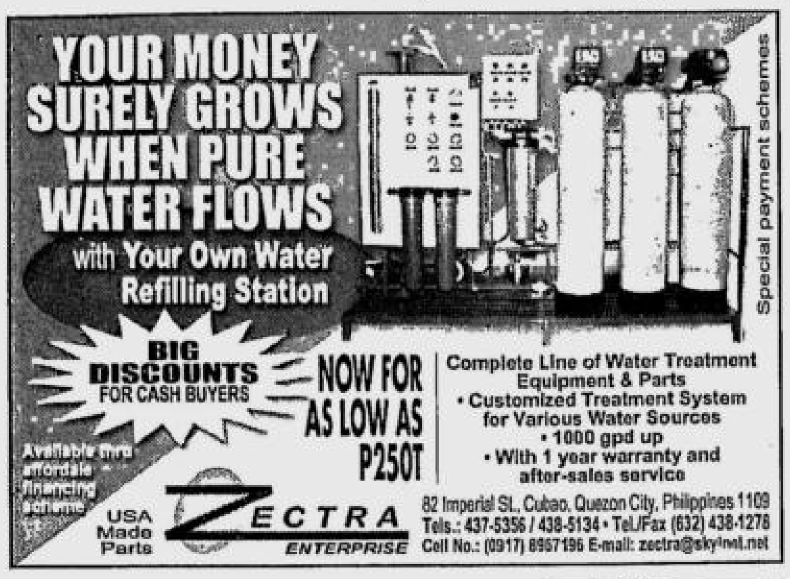
"Our cashier was about to deposit the payroll when the PDIC people arrived, so the money for our staff was no longer deposited," Ajero said.

Stella Estremera, Sun*Star's managing editor, yesterday wrote in her column "Spider's Web" that the bank's closure came as a surprise.

"After learning about that fateful incident, I simply called up my mom to tell her I can't give her any money since I could no longer spare any," Estremera said.

Like most of Sun*Star's employees, Estremera maintains a savings account with the bank.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau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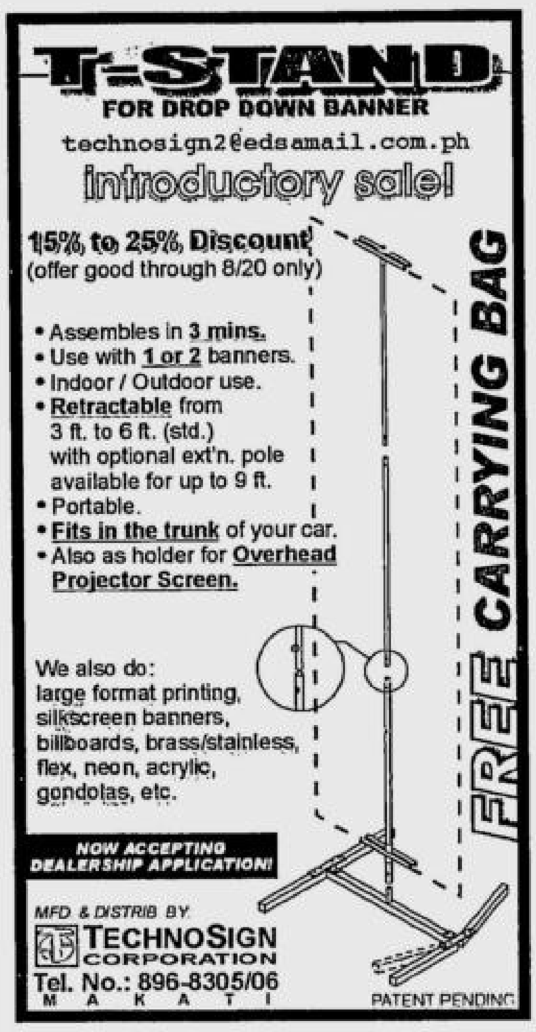
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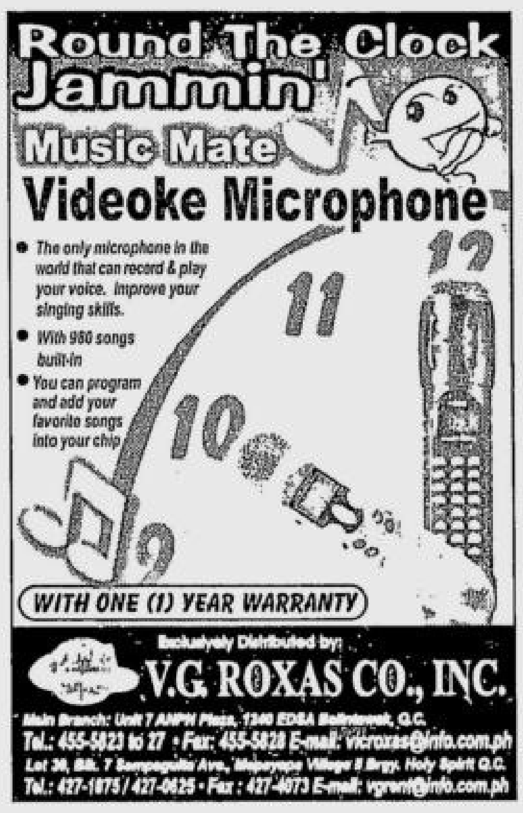
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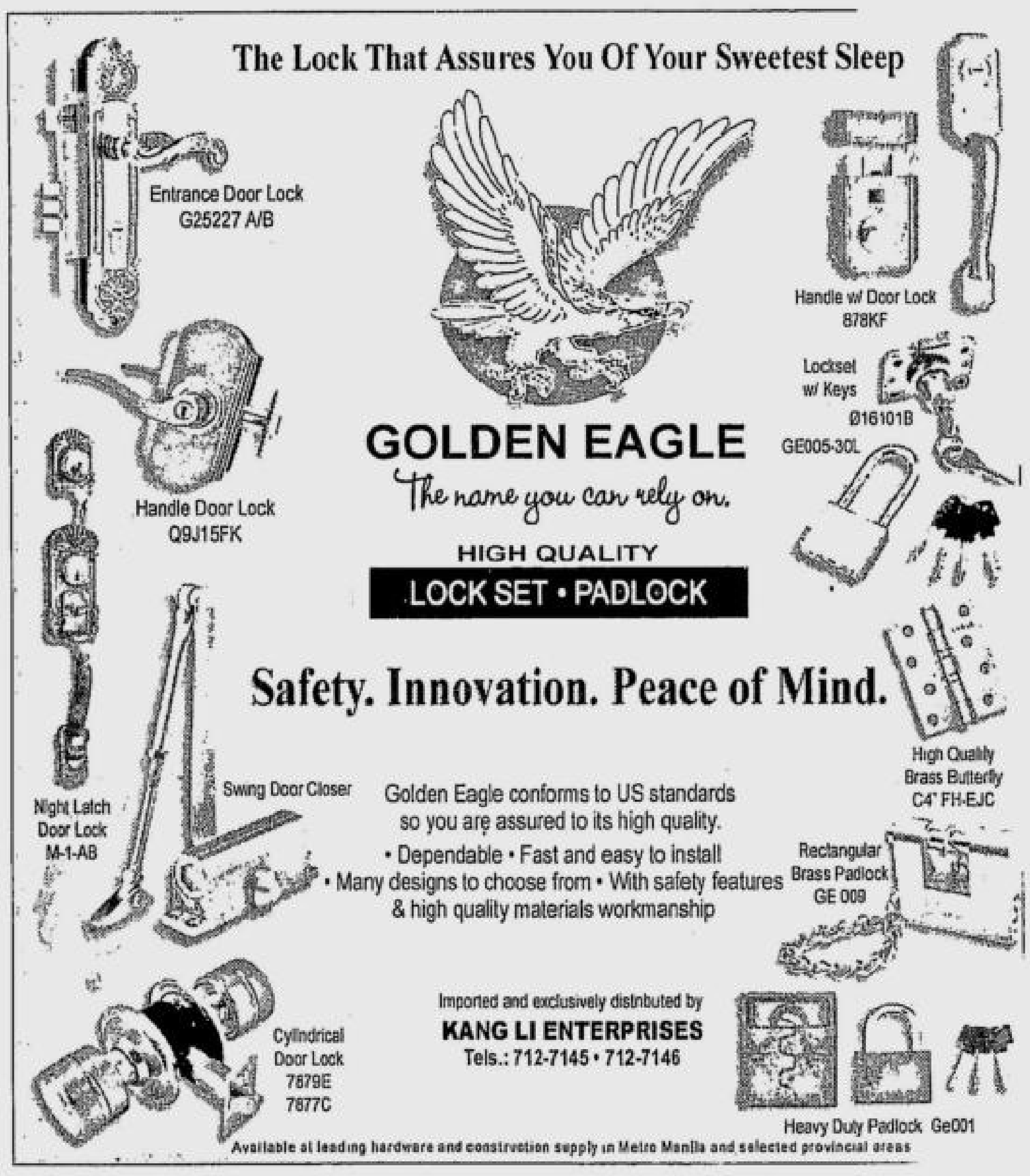
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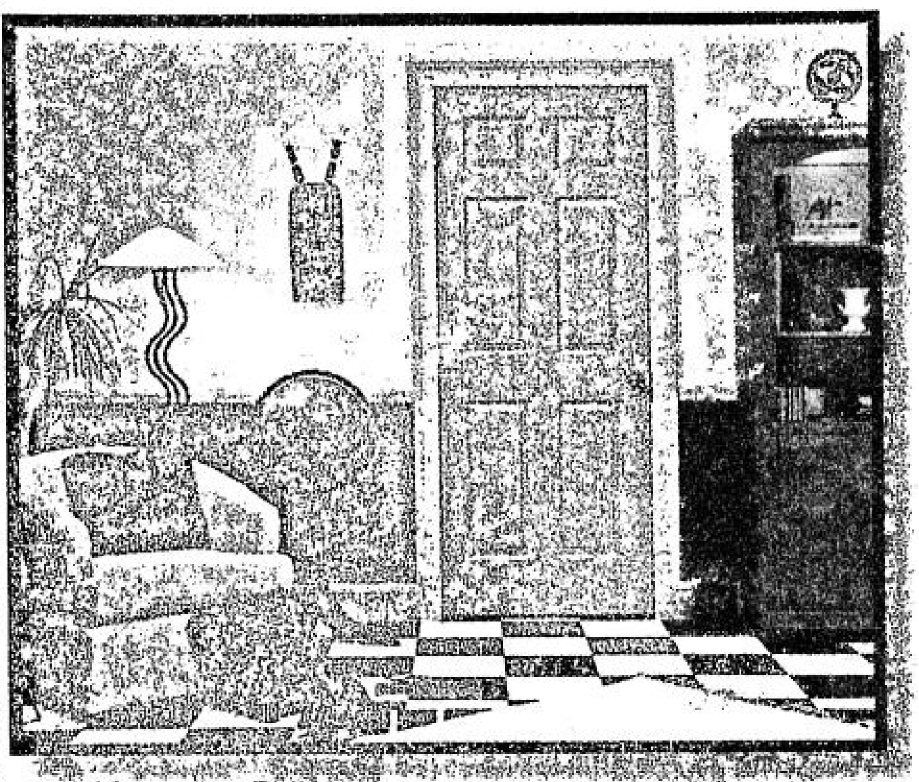

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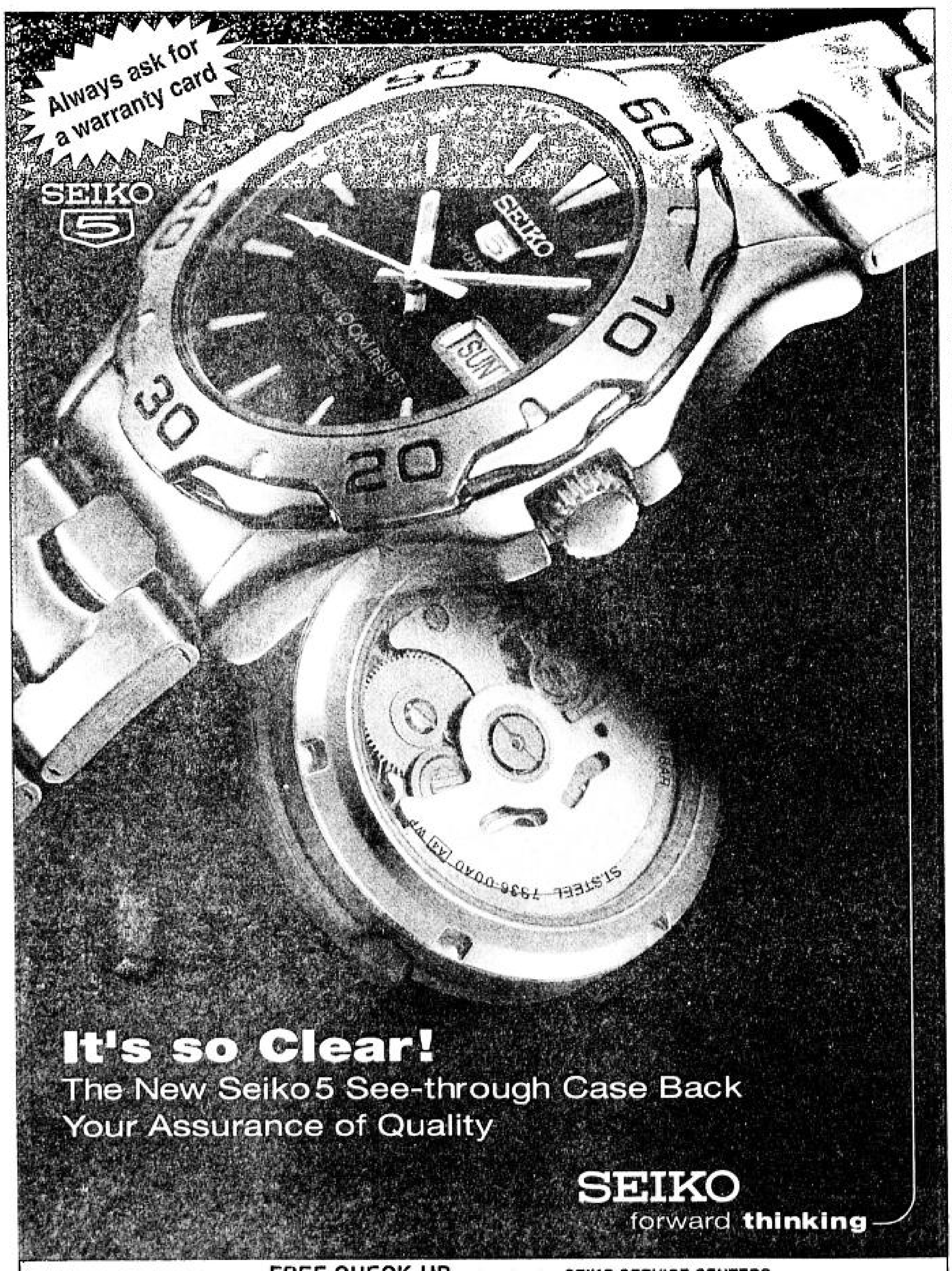
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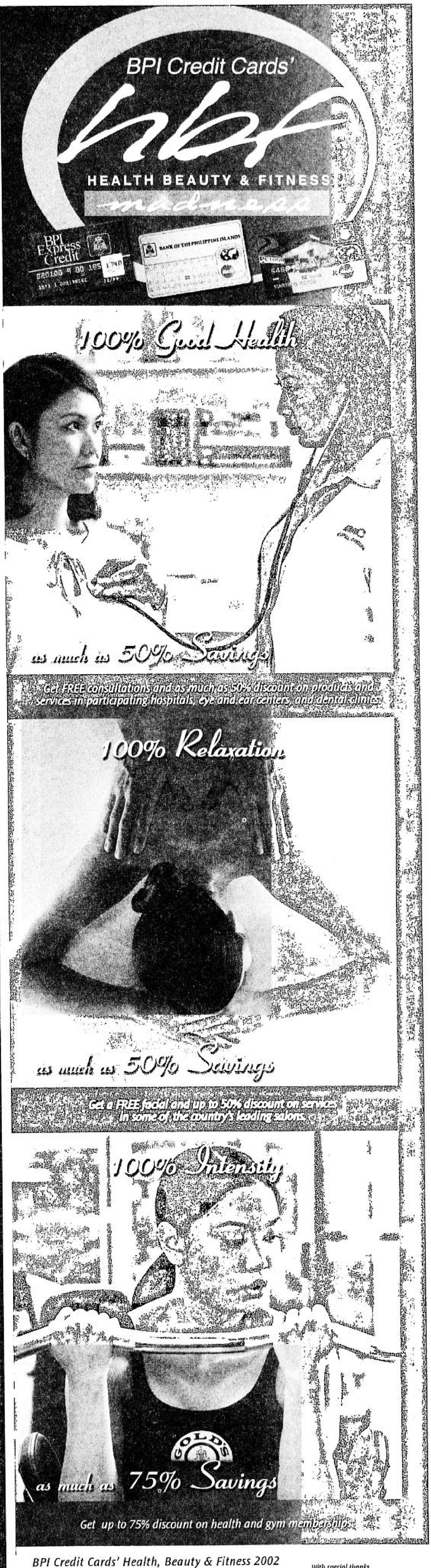
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RP democracy shortfalls peril political setup

From page A1

lyzes the legislative agenda; high and unacceptable crime incidence, highlighting the weak law and order enforcement; rising fiscal deficit that curtails government capacity to finance development programs; pervasive corruption; and, most of all, widespread poverty and gaping income inequality. All this fuels political and social tensions, stretching the fabric of national consensus and putting a heavy load on the political system's capacity to meet these demands.

The UNDP report also finds echoes in the rising clamor for a strong political leadership, shortcuts to legal rights in law enforcement, and the growing allure of the reentry of the "strongman" on horseback as a solution to the political and social malaise. These impulses were captured in a recent survey conducted by Prof. Jose V. Abueva, of the University of the Philippines, which found that while 72 percent of respondents affirmed "democracy is the best political system in all circumstances," they also said they were disenchanted with the way Philippine democracy worked.

Relevant to the Philippines is the warning by Sakiko-Fukuda-Parr, chief author of the report, that: "Around the world, there is a growing sense that democracy has not delivered development such as more jobs, schools, health care for ordinary people."

Another section of the report, launched in Manila on July 24, said: "When democratic governments do not respond to the needs of poor people, the public becomes inclined to support authoritarianism or populist leaders who claim limiting civil liberties will accelerate economic growth and promote economic social progress and stability.

"In Latin America, high income inequality and poverty go hand in hand with low public trust in political institutions and greater willingness to accept authoritarian rule and violation of human rights."

Trade-off

The report, however, emphatically points out that while authoritarian leaders promise better outcome and that democracy must be sacrificed for economic and social progress, "there is no evidence of such trade-off."

The report says that statistical studies find that "neither authoritarianism nor democracy is a factor determining either the rate of economic growth or how it is distributed.

"Costa Rica, Latin American's most stable democracy, achieved 1.1-percent annual growth in per capita income between 1975 and 2000, faster than the regional average of 0.7 percent, and boasts the region's most equitable distribution of income, education and health. But in Brazil democracy coexists with economic and social inequalities that are among the world's largest. More authoritarian Paraguay achieved the region's average per capita income growth rate but has also failed to expand social and economic opportunities."

We leave the issue of trade-off in the meantime, but let it be emphasized that it has complex and nuanced dimensions indicating it is not just an issue of which system is better—democracy or authoritarianism.

The report puts back political governance as the driver of human development, downgrading the thesis that neither authoritarianism nor market economics can defeat poverty and social inequality.

Issues

Mark Malloch Brown, UNDP administrator, said in a function in Malacañang during the launching of the report, that governments "should put politics back to poverty eradication."

He said: "Unless the governments are able to demonstrate to their citizens that they are taking successful action on bread-and-butter issues from jobs to crimes and schools—and by doing so make serious inroads on poverty—the dramatic expansion of democracy risks going in reverse."

The poor, he said, must be given "a real political voice and access to strong, transparent institutions capable of providing them with the kind of personal security, access to justice and services from health to education they so desperately need."

The report ranks 173 countries according to their level of human development as defined by the Millennium Development Goals, which set measurable objectives for development and eradication by 2015.

In the indicators for human development, the Philippines fared poorly. While Fukuda-Parr praised the Philippines as "one of the foremost countries where the people are really committed to democracy," the indicators speak volumes for the Philippine human development deficit.

Category

The Philippines ranks 77 in the human development index (HDI) achievements in terms of life expectancy, educational attainment and adjusted real income. It is in the medium HDI category. Singapore and Hong Kong are in the high human development bracket. Singapore's rank is 25, and Hong Kong's 23. Among Southeast Asian Nations, Malaysia ranks higher than the Philippines with 59, also in the medium category. Vietnam's rank is 109, Indonesia's, 110, and Cambodia's, 130.

In the progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, the Philippines is "far behind" in meeting the target of having the proportion of people suffering from hunger. It achieved the target of ensuring that children can complete primary education.

It has achieved the goal of eliminating gender disparity in all levels of education. It is "on track" in reducing under-five and infant mortality rates by two-thirds, but "far behind" in halving the proportion of people without access to improved water sources.

On the subjective indicators of governance, the Philippines has a high score in polity, with eight points (10 points indicate most democratic). In civil liberties, it scored 3 (partly free); in political rights, 2 (free); press freedom, 30 (free). In political stability, it scored –0.21 (in a scale of –2.5 to 2.5, higher is better). Our score in law and order is 2 (in a scale of 0-6); rule of law, -0.49 (in a scale of –2.5 to 2.5); government effectiveness, 0.03 (-2.5 to 2.5); and corruption perceptions index, 2.9 (scale of 0-10).

In summary, the above figures underscore our deficits in poverty alleviation trends and in governance problems while highlighting our strength in the formal political process of democracy.

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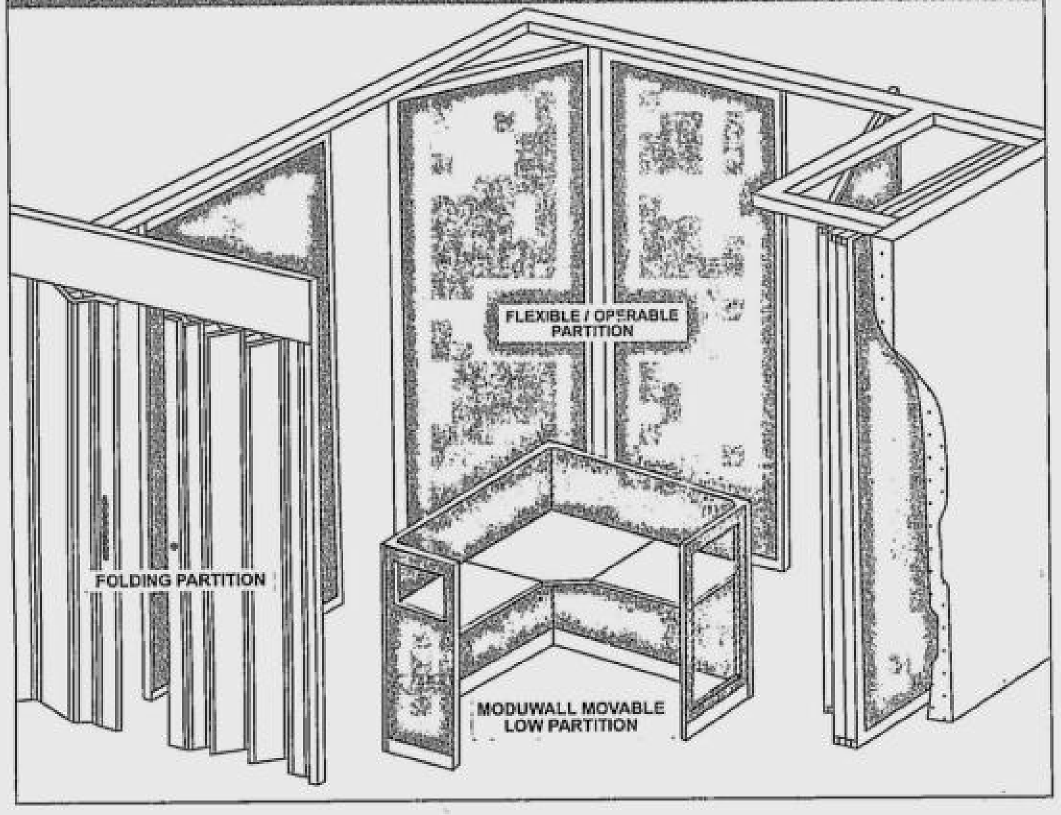

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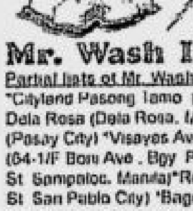

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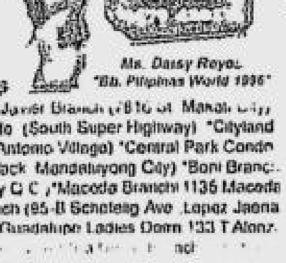

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FOR MECHANICS See posters or inquire from any Mr. Wash outlet for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 266 Series of 2002

Mt. Apo remains 'off limits' to trekkers

DAVAO CITY—Bad news for Mt. Apo trekkers.

Closed to climbers for two years now, the country's highest peak will remain "off limits" for an indefinite period.

The Protected Area Management Board had declared the national park a restricted area to help revive its rich vegetation.

During its meeting on July 26 in Digos City, the board decided to extend the restriction, which should have been lifted last month.

John Ryan Largo, founding chair of the Human Development International, a group that campaigned side by side with the Mt. Apo Foundation for the continued closure, said the extension was only "a first step."

Immediate action should be taken to delineate the park's boundary, Largo said. He added that concerned groups were pushing efforts "to define the tenurial rights, stop migration and encroachment, initiate poverty alleviation projects, conduct stock assessment and identity, and protect breeding areas."

Many climbers have been defying the ban, though, and the Department of Tourism said complaints from "hardline" trekkers had been mounting.

"We can't do anything," DOT spokesperson Roger Layson said. "It's up to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. We only promote the place as an eco-tourism site."

PAMB, admitting that it lacked personnel, called on residents in the area to help enforce the prohibition. *Ayan C. Mellejor and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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BULLETIN NO. 3: 29-CENTAVO OIL PRICE INCREASE EXPECTED IN AUGUST

The average oil price increase this month will likely be 29 centavos per liter due to the average $0.75 increase in Dubai crude prices (from $23.91 in June to $24.66 in July) and the depreciation of the peso by 16 centavos (from P50.43 in June to P50.59 in July).

However, since there is a wide fluctuation in world prices, as shown by a drop in prices two weeks ago ($25.27 to $24.52), we are appealing to the oil companies to rethink their decision to raise prices by 29 centavos. We suggest that they consider the movement of both crude oil prices and the foreign exchange in the first two weeks of August before they announce a price increase this month.

Despite the planned increase, we would like to assure the consumers that there will be no increase in the prices of basic commodities as well as in transport fares and shipping rates because the expected increase is lower than the 35 centavo reduction effected late June.

PART V - OUR PPA WORK SCHEDULE: AUGUST TO OCTOBER

We are pleased that President Arroyo considered many of the suggestions stated in our previous print announcements **Part I to IV on PPA**, as well as the suggestions made by others.

Our Work Schedule from August to October

1. Work closely with Congress on the Amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reform Act and on the **early passage of the National Transmission Co. (TRANSCO) Franchise Bill** as we are paying a penalty for (a) the natural gas generated from Malampaya and (b) the operation of natural gas-fired power plants which **cannot** be used at their maximum capacity because existing transmission lines cannot adequately carry a load of around 2,600 MW of power coming from the said plants.
2. While we understand the need to keep the renegotiations of the IPP contracts behind closed doors for the time being, we need to work closely with the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) on the broad parameters of the 11 IPP contracts that did not pass the review committee and which will require negotiations on the financial terms.
3. Also, we will work closely with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to obtain more information on the 5 IPP contracts that have been declared onerous and the timetable of the course of action to be taken by the Justice Department.

We welcome the 25% discount to be given to industrial and commercial power users under Phase 1 to 3 of the Special Program to Enhance Electricity Demand (SPEED).

As a result of this discount, stranded costs will go down as more excess power, not used but paid for anyway as PPA cost, will now be consumed. Consequently, excess power will be reduced which, in turn, will lower PPA stranded costs.

We would like to express appreciation to the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department of Energy, Napocor and Meralco for working together in coming up with the above program in just a week after the President delivered her SONA.

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Open wound

EDITORIAL

THE TIME has come to resolve the impasse in the Senate once and for all. Today's session may not be the upper chamber's "last chance" to redeem itself, as administration Sen. Robert Barbers melodramatically put it over the weekend. But he's not far off the mark. If the wrangling continues, or if yet another agreement is reached only to be followed by yet another squabble, then the Senate's slide down the slippery slope of public disgust will be irreversible.

At issue is the validity of the four-day session the opposition conducted from June 3 to 6, after the once and future minority launched the controversial Senate "coup." At stake, however, is nothing less than the administration majority's capacity to impose its political will on the upper chamber.

A week ago, the Senate Resolution No. 391 set forth the terms of the two parties' agreement to resume working together. The resolution accepted the authority of the administration majority, but it also acknowledged the work the opposition-only Senate expended on three bills during the June 3 to 6 "rump" session. (Not coincidentally, two of the three bills were authored by Sen. Robert Jaworski, who has since joined the administration coalition.)

After a one-day break, however, the fireworks erupted again. Last Wednesday, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. criticized Senate President Franklin Drilon for saying that the opposition had tried to take advantage of Barbers' absence on Monday—he had to attend a wedding—to force a vote on the validity issue. Pimentel said the minority had no intention of forcing a vote on the validity issue, a claim rebutted by Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda-Leviste, who said Angara had intimated otherwise. Pimentel then suggested that the impasse in the Senate can be solved only if "nobody would try to use a crystal ball" to read other people's minds.

Administration maverick Sen. Joker Arroyo responded by taking Pimentel to task for insinuating the validity of the opposition's session without the benefit of a vote on the floor. "The whole thing that we tried to avoid is now happening. The wounds have been reopened," opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara lamented.

Well, if one uses Band-Aid to cover a gaping wound, expect the blood to come oozing out again.

Last Monday's resolution was concluded only after a ridiculous eight-hour standoff, during which time the administration senators cooled their heels in their offices while their opposition counterparts—including Foreign Secretary-designate Blas Ople, who was spending his last day in the upper chamber—camped out on the Senate floor, even ordering takeout. The resolution masked the differences between the two parties with a thin film of political gauze.

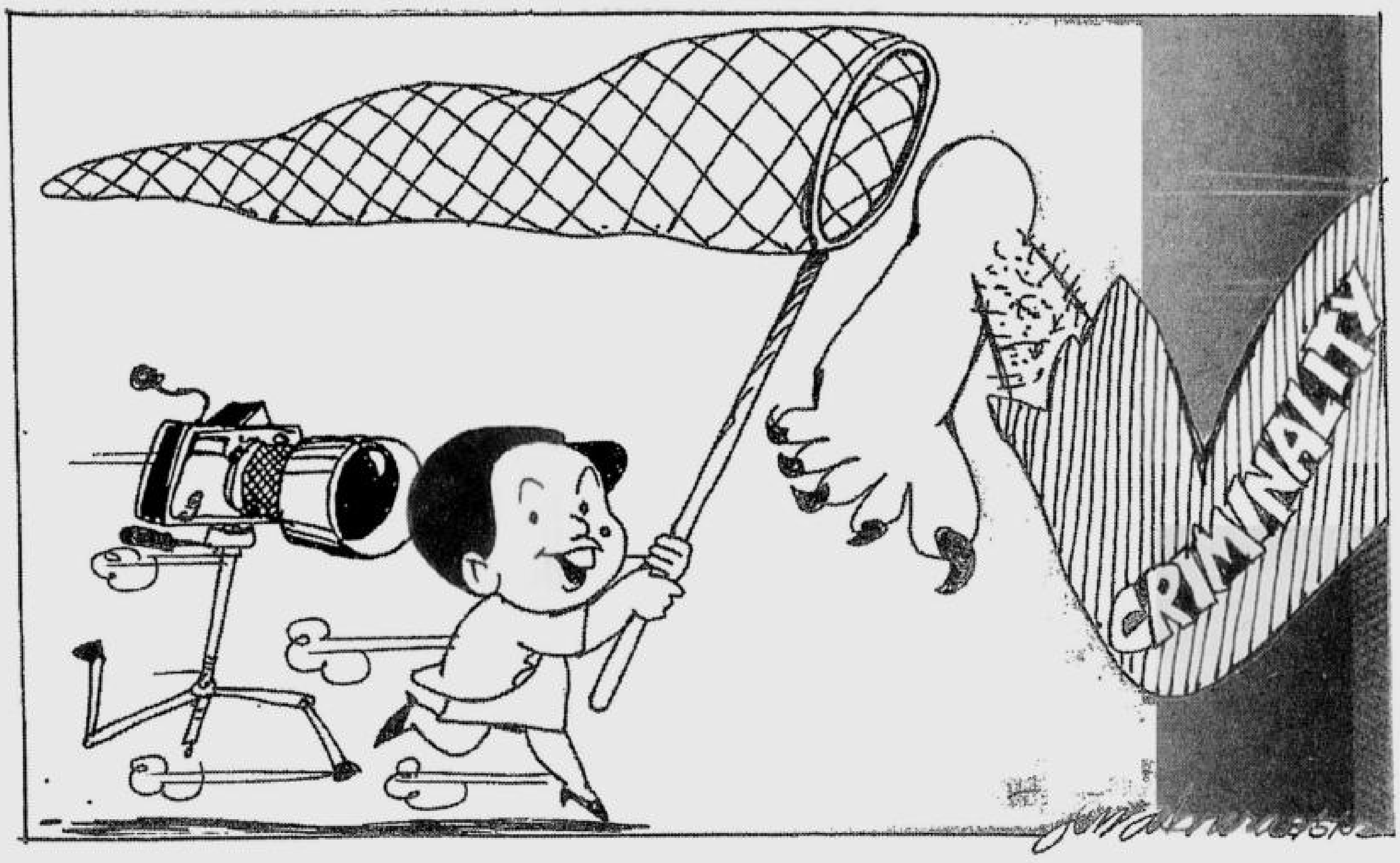
By fudging the issue, by "tacitly" acknowledging the passage of the three bills, the resolution only gave the appearance of having answered the validity question. In point of fact, it merely delayed the actual solution.

That solution requires that the Senate declare the "rump" session as illegal. The administration majority has at least three reasons for doing so. Two are legal, one is practical:

Pimentel, as the minority leader, may have been the ranking official on the Senate floor after Drilon adjourned the session sine die on June 3, but that does not mean he had the authority to declare the session open. According to the Senate's own rules, only the top three officials of the Senate—which the rules presume to represent the majority—have that requisite authority.

Pimentel's fine point last Wednesday, that the three bills are now under the jurisdiction of the House and that therefore the Senate cannot consider them submitted for third and final reading until they have been recalled, assumes that the House was open for business at the time of the "rump" session. But the House had adjourned sine die the day after the Senate did so. In other words, there was no House to submit the three Senate bills to.

If Jaworski objects, as he has in fact objected, his majority colleagues can set him straight: Senate Resolution No. 391 already assumes that the bills were not passed during the opposition's session. It only guarantees that it will be passed soon.



Why there are so many tax scams

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE DISCOVERY of the diversion of P203 million in taxes to private pockets is not the first such scam and the wonder is why the government has not learned its lesson and has not taken steps, after all these many years, to prevent it. The arrest of the Landbank manager in Binangonan, Rizal, may have been a good photo-op for President Macapagal-Arroyo (he was taken to Malacañang so the President could present him to media; so many suspected criminals are being paraded through the halls of the presidential palace these days so the President can have her pictures in the newspapers and television), but he is surely just one small cog in a criminal syndicate. For such scams will not be possible without the connivance of certain Bureau of Internal Revenue and other bank personnel.

The cliché is that crime does not pay, but in the Philippines it does. And the tax scams are proof. Usually, one of the syndicate members is prosecuted and sent to prison but the rest go scot-free to enjoy their loot. And when the fall guy gets out of prison, his share is there for him to enjoy. Worse, oftentimes nobody is prosecuted and the case is forgotten. And the loot is never recovered. So we are really encouraging criminals to steal our taxes.

Poor Philippines. Taxpayers don't pay the correct taxes. The taxes collected are stolen by the very people whose job it is to collect them. In the tax credit certificates scam, fictitious companies were refunded taxes they never paid. In the Fort Bonifacio land scam exposed by Rep. Aniceto Saludo, the government paid the taxes supposed to be paid by a very wealthy corporation. In the Caloocan land scam, a big tract of government-owned land was transferred to a private corporation without the corporation paying a single centavo. Except for a cashier who was sent to prison and the arrested Landbank branch manager, nobody else has been punished for the above scams. And these discovered cases are probably just the tip of the iceberg. There may be many more that have not been and never will be discovered. Speaker Jose de Venecia estimated that at least P90 billion in taxes are lost every year. I think that is an underestimate. Look at some of the tax scams that came to light.

1. In 1995, P539,352,878 in customs duties and wharfage dues paid by Petron and deposited in the Bank of Southeast Asia was diverted into two bank accounts of syndicate members. Because the Bureau of Customs did not actually receive Petron's payments, it demanded the latter to pay again or else it would not release its imported oil product shipments. Petron paid—under protest—with tax credit certificates. It is possible that these tax credit certificates were among those later discovered to have been fraudulently acquired by fictitious companies and passed on to Petron. In other words, the P539 million demanded by the BOC may have been paid with worthless tax credit certificates.

2. In 1980, P40 million or so of BIR taxes were diverted into private accounts in two bank branches by a syndicate. Only the cashier was prosecuted and convicted (a token sacrificial lamb?). The rest were never arrested or prosecuted and are probably still working in the BIR and doing more of the same.

3. During the administration of President Ramos, P54.3 billion (they haven't finished counting yet) were lost in the tax credit scam. To encourage exports, the Department of Finance had set up the One Stop-Shop to process claims of tax refunds by exporters. Taxes paid for materials for products destined for export were refunded to the exporters. A syndicate composed of personnel of the DOF and private companies got refunds for taxes that were never paid in the first place, some by non-existent companies. The government not only did not get any payment but actually paid out money from the treasury for the tax refunds. These tax credit certificates were used by third parties like Petron, which bought them at a discount, to pay their own legitimate taxes. Thus the government was cheated twice: first, by refunding taxes that were never paid, and second by being paid for subsequent taxes with these fake tax certificates.

Nobody has yet been prosecuted for this scam.

4. In 1990, Gotesco Investment bought a 2.2-hectare commercial lot owned by the Caloocan government beside the Bonifacio Monument where now stands an Ever-Gotesco mall. Gotesco paid with two checks worth almost P183 million. The checks were never cashed or deposited in the account of the Caloocan government; they were taken back by Gotesco. Nevertheless, a transfer certificate of title for the property was issued to Gotesco. Thus, the people of Caloocan lost the valuable property without being paid a single centavo. Not only that, even before Gotesco got the title, it has already mortgaged the property to the Philippine National Bank for P300 million. The National Bureau of Investigation conducted an investigation and recommend prosecution of those involved. But until now, the Department of Justice has not filed any charges.

5. In the exposé by Congressman Saludo, the Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. has filed 19 tax refund cases with the Court of Tax Appeals totaling P6 billion. Two of these cases were already decided in favor of FBDC but the BIR under Commissioner Rene Bañez, who used to be a tax consultant of the controlling interests of FBDC, did not appeal the cases. Saludo said the BIR could have deliberately lost the tax cases.

Worse, the government used P1.18 billion of taxpayers' money to pay for the documentary tax liabilities supposed to be paid by FBDC. Where have you seen a government, instead of demanding the payment of taxes from a private corporation actually paying the taxes itself? Only in the Philippines.

(To be continued)

Déjà vu

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

READING or watching the news these days, I get the sinking feeling we've been there before. The time was late 1991, and we were rived in a violent dispute over the US bases. The "violent" wasn't always metaphorical, several clashes taking place between marchers of both sides, and officials and residents of Olongapo in particular, host of the biggest US base at Subic, threatening anti-US bases protesters and visitors with mayhem.

Olongapo and Angeles have simply been replaced by Basilan and Zamboanga as the heartland of pro-Americanism. They're the ones who have hailed the Balikatan exercises as the greatest thing to have happened to this country and have been vociferous in their call for the signing of the Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement.

Like Olongapo and Angeles in the past, they have been the beneficiary of tremendous financial aid, various infrastructure projects, and the incidental boost to the local economy by the presence of foreign troops. Wahab Akbar, the Basilan governor, in particular, has been rolling in money since the Balikatan exercises. Elsewhere in the country, local officials who are unable to solve vicious criminality in their area are taken to task. Akbar, under whose term the Abu Sayyaf grew to the monster it is now, has not. He has been given close to a billion pesos to build a circumferential road in Basilan—feel free to speculate about how much will actually go to the road—and other generous emoluments. It's easy in circumstances like those to mistake the greatest thing that has happened to you for the greatest thing that has happened to the country.

Gordon's argument then was that the rejection of the bases treaty would cause irreparable harm to the country's economy. Olongapo, he said quite frankly, stood to be impoverished, as thousands of residents would lose their jobs and livelihood with the US bases gone. But it wasn't just Olongapo that stared poverty in the face, the country did, too. The country stood to lose millions of dollars in rent money, quite apart from the direct contributions to the local economy the bases were making. All in all, said Gordon completely earnestly, there was no substitute for the bases. We killed them, we killed ourselves.

None of it came true. The Senate said no to the bases, and Subic became SBMA. And wonder of wonders, the one person who said there was no substitute for the US bases was named by Fidel Ramos to head it. Gordon promptly discovered there was no end of things you could do with Subic. To his credit of course, he did do a good job of managing it, at least compared to the crooks and incompetents who ran Clark. But which showed there was no end of substitute for the US bases if you had the imagination to see it and the belief in yourself to see it through.

Gordon would go on, after some temporary setbacks, among them his loss of SBMA, which he wept unabashedly over on TV, to become tourism secretary.

Ah, you say, but surely there's a difference between the bases and the logistics agreement? Surely, as Roilo Golez says, the MLSA is a minor agreement whose terms are clearly spelled out, which allows no permanent structures to be built by the Americans, and which rests control in the hands of the Philippine government? Surely, unlike the bases treaty, there's no harm in passing it?

Not at all. The MLSA will be as transparent as the Balikatan exercise, where we depended for assessments of its success or failure, indeed of its hewing to the terms of the VFA or not, solely on the very people who were carrying it out. Could you have expected them to say the war games were not a smashing success, or grossly violated the letter and spirit of the VFA? That is like asking GMA to give herself a failing grade. As to everything resting under our control, we only have to remember the Chinook that crashed off Negros Oriental. No Filipino commander knew about that flight. And no Filipino was in sight when they carried out the rescue operations. The Americans kept them away, though the whole point of the Balikatan, as its very title suggests, was cooperation.

You have the VFA, which allows the US to bring troops anywhere in this country for fun and games, you have the MLSA which allows the US to build "impermanent" infra and supra structure anywhere in this country, and you have the American jihad known as the holy "war against terrorism," which can pretty much justify anything in this country (or even in the US, as Filipino green card holders have learned over the past year), what in God's name do you need bases for? The entire package accomplishes the same thing, sans high overhead costs and venereal disease, or worse, Amerasian babies.

The only difference between then and now is that Gordon and company defended the US bases completely on grounds of dollars and cents. Nothing was said about the political wisdom of having US bases around. It was in fact admitted as a liability as it invited terrorist attacks on the country—clearly a far more real threat today. But the return of American troops is no longer being sold on dollars and cents. It is being sold in the same epic terms as MacArthur's landing in Leyte, with no small help from a sudden and unceasing barrage of war movies from Hollywood.

We rejected the bases treaty in 1991, I don't know that we will do the same thing again. Santayana wasn't completely on target when he said those who do not read their history are condemned to repeat it. Those who do not read their history are condemned only to repeat the wrong things, not the right ones.

I have only one monumental anxiety about what would happen if we did reject the MLSA. Which is that Wahab Akbar or Clara Lobregat might become the next tourism secretary.

Skirting validity issue no longer possible?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TODAY the majority coalition in the Senate is expected to push for a favorable vote on the Journal of June 3, which will recognize the sine die adjournment of the first regular session of the 12th Congress by Senate President Franklin Drilon. Establishing that record would mean that the earlier session called by the opposition on that date was void and invalid. Actually this is a question that the Senate leadership would have preferred to skirt in order to de-escalate the tensions in the chamber. For a while hopes were high that avoiding that vote was possible, after 19 senators from both majority and minority signed Resolution 391 last Tuesday early morning, recognizing the "primacy and authority" of the administration senators on all other matters, in exchange for allowing three bills passed during the June 3-6 sessions to be "approved as printed on third reading," and another bill, the absentee voting bill, to be subjected to further interpellations and second and third reading. But last Wednesday afternoon, the opposition opened fire once again on the issue of the validity of the June 3 session, provoking heated debate again. Some majority members have since convinced Drilon that skirting the validity issue is no longer possible; now they want a vote, confident that they have the numbers. The opposition has said it would not vote on the issue, but would try to block it. This afternoon's session should be very interesting.

* * *

It may not sound polite; in fact, it seems quite mercenary. But President Macapagal-Arroyo was merely stating the truth when she said that it was "payback time" for the United States, whose anti-terrorism campaign her government had supported since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks at great political risks. She pleaded to visiting Secretary of State Colin Powell that Philippine tuna be given a better treatment in the US market than the 6-12 percent tariff being imposed on it, citing the zero tariff for Andean tuna from Peru and other countries in the Latin American region. GMA cited how some 100,000 Filipinos in the General Santos area stand to be affected by this discriminatory move, and asked for "payback" in preferential treatment for our tuna.

But the fact is that the Americans may just be applying the harsh rules of geo-politics in the tuna game. Obviously in their calculation, it is more important for them to prop up the tuna-canners of Latin America than our own in Mindanao, in order to help shore up the political stability of that volatile region now beset by frightful contagious economic woes after the devastating Argentine fallout and now the shaky Brazilian economy, the region's largest.

* * *

Ms Macapagal was quoted as saying that she wishes Vice President Teofisto Guingona would return to the Cabinet and accept the post of "Mindanao Czar," which will oversee and push the rehabilitation and development of the big island. No reaction has been heard from the Vice President, but I can imagine that he may be hesitant to accept the offer, assuming it would be formalized, for a number of reasons. One is that being outside the Cabinet enables him to be more flexible about his promised "critical collaboration" with the administration: doubtless he feels freer to speak his mind outside the Cabinet. Another is his doubt over where the funding for the proposed post is to come from. Speaker Joe de Venecia has indicated in a recent conversation with this columnist that Congress could perhaps allocate P50 million initially for it.

If I were to offer unsolicited advice to the VP, I would endorse this Cabinet position as it would offer him tremendous opportunities to serve Mindanao, which is so significant for him as he is only the second Mindanaoan to reach the second highest post in the land, after Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez in the early '60s. Ultimately it boils down to a personal question that Guingona has to weigh: where can he best serve his country? If funding were the problem, one possible source that may have opened up after Powell's Manila trip may be the $5 billion "US Millennium Challenge" economic development package that the US government is said to be ready to offer various developing countries closely allied with its global anti-terrorism campaign. President Macapagal has said that RP would doubtless qualify for this fund and that the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao should get the lion's share if it is made available to RP.

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It is especially significant that Guingona's first public speech after his resignation from the foreign secretary's post two weeks ago should be about the need for self-reliance if we are to have economic development. This is a thesis that he could test in the long-delayed development of Mindanao. Guingona maintained that the reason we have continuing poverty in the face of foreign investments and struggle with trade imbalances and deficits in the wake of our drive for more exports is that we lack productivity. "We have the potential to produce enough—some say enough for more than a hundred million Filipinos—but we do not tap the possibilities we have," he said. He stressed that foreign investors are allowed to exploit our resources and workers without ensuring technology transfer, without modernizing our plants or using our raw materials, or doing any forward integration with Filipino manufacturers. He noted, for instance, that while foreign firms engaged in electronics exported last March some $1.5 billion of electronic components, they also imported $849 million worth of components, which is equivalent to 70 percent of our electronic exports for that period.

(To be continued)

Imperial Manila

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Datu Amir Baraguir

DISTRESSING is the word to describe the information from the eminent Mindanao poet-fictionist Dr. Jaime An Lim that in the year 2000, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts' budget allocation for Mindanao was less than one percent of its total grants money. Doubly distressing is the news that P24 million went to the National Capital Region.

I like the way Dr. Lim delivers it: "The NCR is not the Philippines, and the Philippines is not the NCR."

I echo the same statement, but I wish to say it not just of the NCCA. Fact is, I do not even know whom to address the statement. This asymmetry in the NCCA is just the tip of the iceberg. To be sure, the virus known as Imperial Manila is so pervasive in Filipino culture that I think it has infested many other sectors of our society. Our country seems to be run on all fronts by such an imperial deference.

The most glaring example is broadcast media, television in particular. In one national cable TV station, the daily noontime talk show host once received a comment from a viewer in Tacurong City. Instead of replying first, the host blurts "where is Tacurong?" Of course I am convinced he did not know where Tacurong City was. But in a recent segment, the same host again received a comment from a viewer in Kidapawan City. His guest asked "where is Kidapawan City?" The host mumbled by saying, "Oh I think it is somewhere in the south."

Other talk show hosts are equally ignorant about the nation's geography. Talk show topics dwell on such decadent lifestyles as sexual promiscuity, extramarital affairs, same sex love, primacy of pleasure, as though these were biblical or Qur'anic truths applicable to all Filipinos, and as though cultural mores in the provinces were as degenerate as those in some Manila conclaves.

When there is a need to portray *kasambahay* roles, the poor hapless woman is made to speak with a Visayan accent. When a Negritoid Filipina beauty is part of the cast, she assumes the role of a laughing stock and the butt of racial jokes. How much we still are (pardon the use of this antiquated, downright colonial term) in the *moro-moro* age!

News stories may be as equally ignorant. A boat capsizing in the Rio Grande de Mindanao was once reported as a "sea mishap." The headline "Mindanao banks under tight watch" was disappointing in that it meant only banks in Zamboanga City. With TV a more popular medium than print media, and hence a potent public opinion tool. Imagine how much error it spreads in the minds of the young, the thinkers and doers of tomorrow. I hate to say this, but—save for an enlightened few—much of Filipino TV is an instrument of ignorance.

"Somewhere in the south" seems to be where Mindanao is in the minds of imperial Manilans.

National history is as equally lacking. School textbooks are mostly deficient on Mindanao events and heroes and, if at all, do not even have the correct data. One university professor of mine recalls that when he first taught history in Jolo in the 1970s, he met a group of young Tausug students who were angry at the erroneous portrayal of their ancestors in history class. Thirty years or so later, I presume that anger is still there. We cannot blame them.

The American-written Taylor papers on the Philippine-American War described Mindanao as "too far from the center" of the Aguinaldo maelstrom. That is a sweeping statement. It is not true, of course. And it is not true because they do not know the truth.

But that seems to be the same line and the same message we see in what we teach our school youth today. Mindanao, if ever it can be located, is still in the Philippine boondocks in the minds of many of our "national" historians, many of whom are as good only as local historians because all they focus on is Manila/Luzon history.

Even current economic prospects are not spared from Manila-centeredness. In the past six months, 800,000 Filipinos from the provinces were said to have entered Metro Manila. All wish to stake their lives there, and only for an illusion: national politicians focus their projects more on Metro Manila. Who would care to live in the boondocks?

It takes only one disgruntled ex-GMA supporter to make others think that he is speaking for all Filipinos when he is nothing more than a particularly noisy minority. When congressmen and senators fight, which is often, they probably think the whole country finds it cute. But that is how our country thinks, that Manila is the Philippines, the Philippines is Manila. As an old transplanted saying goes, when Manila sneezes, the whole country catches a cold.

I was told that the next fiscal budget for Mindanao from the NCCA will be increased to 10 percent. But hold your breath—if NCR again gets a bigger slice, that doesn't change the picture. It still is tokenism.

Manila-centered culture disfigures the development of a real national identity.

Have you ever wondered that, under the tip of the imperial noses—because all the glare of public opinion is on Manila—Mindanao has bred little martinets who recommend summary executions to flush out crime suspects?

Comments to monta@sni.ph

Colin Powell, human being

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

AMERICA owes the Philippines big-time for its strong cooperation in the war on terrorism. We shall never know what greater tragedies than Sept. 11 we have already prevented by disrupting al-Qaida operations here, only the certainty that we have helped an old friend in a time of need. For, whatever terrorists are planning, they shall have no safe haven here. So the President is absolutely right to press for real, not token help. And on more, much more than Basilan, the Abu Sayyaf, and a bunch of second-hand equipment they call "logistics."

There ought to be a broad thrust to re-engage our two countries on all fronts—economics and trade, investment and corruption, the military and terrorism, international crime, population, education, health and social issues—and this time to do it right.

America and the Philippines belong together now. We always have, in heart and mind. With four million of the best Filipinos climbing to the top, building a future in the US homeland, and our nationalists here, to remind us of our mistakes in the past, now is the time to fix it all. Now is the time to take our place at the global table, as America's equal partner in Southeast Asia and the brutal economic battles for survival in the 21st century. The two nations have plenty to parley about that can result in their mutual benefit. This has always been the basis for an equal partnership and a long lasting friendship between nations. Both have something to gain from united action that is invaluable to their common future. Let us not allow resentments over an unjust past, cloud our judgment about the possibilities offered by that future.

More on this in the weeks to come. But before the moment passes, and the swinging door of timely observation shuts, the significance of a phenomenon like Colin Powell, the human being, deserves today's commentary.

"YOU didn't know he was a black man, did you? You probably thought he was White Anglo Saxon Protestant!"

This teasing comment must have gone around many a breakfast table last Sunday morning, as many Filipinos saw those pictures of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and US Secretary of State Colin Powell on the front page of their favorite newspaper. Her shining red-vermillion dress, contrasting against his dark and reassuring blue, made their handshake photo, emblematic of the newfound friendship between erstwhile allies, now in the white heat of a perilous new era.

I hope, we have gained a real friend in Colin Powell, whom many say should already have become the first black President of the United States of America—not because he is black, but because he is Colin Powell, a man of integrity, bravery, and nobility, as great a battlefield general as Douglas MacArthur, in my opinion, but more cerebral, and definitely less vain.

In turning down the possibility of a Republican Presidential nomination in 1996, he disappointed Americans, black and white and brown and yellow, who were sick of having a horny teenager for a President in Bill Clinton. But by saying, he did not "yet" have the stomach for politics, Colin Powell left the door wide open.

Since John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and John Lennon passed away, very few great men have inspired my hope and confidence in the future of mankind more than Colin Powell. He is living proof of the very great concept, held to be self-evident as the central idea of American democracy, that all men are created equal. That simple concept first came to life in Abraham Lincoln's destruction of slavery and the manumission of Negro slaves from personal bondage in the 1860s, when he said, "No nation can long endure half-slave and half-free. For either we shall all be slaves, or we shall all be free!"

Before Abe Lincoln (who was a Republican mind you), you could easily have purchased Colin Powell's greatgrandparents on the slave docks in the old port of Jamaica—a matching pair for less than the price of a good draught horse. You would have owned them body and soul, legally, to do with as you want, to murder or uplift, to rape, to love, to exploit, to profit from or not, as you would any other material thing you owned.

It was an infamous period, that infancy of American democracy, which deprived a million Africans of their natural liberty in a forced diaspora to a faraway land. Kidnapped by 17th and 18th century European slave raiders who swooped down on villages and scooped up them like wild game, as trawlers do with tuna, they were transported to the Americas under inhuman conditions. There, they were sold to colonists and settlers hungry for the sinew and stamina of tropical laborers. In the cotton and cane fields of the South, in the factories of the North, in the conquest and reshaping of that vast American continent to the Middle and Far West, the Negro is the unsung hero of two hundred years, much like our own OFWs today.

Born to poor immigrants from Jamaica, who immigrated to America, much like our own mostly Ilocano pioneers, in the early part of the 20th century, Colin Powell grew up in the South Bronx of New York City and lived the Negro experience in America.

Like our own countrymen now in America, he is the fulfillment of a promise of equal opportunity that has taken America more than two centuries to attain. Colin Powell is the first product of that continuing human social evolution which insists that greatness, nobility, intelligence, and grace, are colorless metaphysical quantities.

We must all remember this when inevitably, Mindanao flares up again, and we realize how far we are from the ideals of democracy.

'Ignore the senators'

ENRAGED by the endless intramural in the Senate and apparently with no one else to turn to, an irate reader vented his anger instead on the INQUIRER. It was like shooting the messenger for bringing the bad news.

The reader, Jose Enriquez of Cainta, Rizal, did not mince words in expressing his disgust with the way the senators have been conducting themselves since the opening of the regular session of Congress.

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

He wrote: "I am MAD, MAD, MAD about our senators. I work my butt off six days a week, 10 hours a day so I can give my family a decent life. A big portion of my salary goes to taxes to the government. That's the money that those good for nothing senators are spending as they engage in their antics and political maneuverings.

"Will you please stop writing about those bunch of idiots! My day is ruined whenever I read about those senators who have been acting like spoiled brats. They have not done anything that would make them worthy of the millions of pesos that taxpayers like me have to pay for their salaries and other privileges.

"I wish somebody would hold all of them hostage and then the Pasay PNP will be assigned to rescue them.

"I plead with you to ignore those senators. Do not write anything more about them. They are just publicity seekers and opportunists. Why don't you write about more inspiring stories about other events in the country? There are hundreds of news around the country that should be published rather than the stories about those damned senators."

Same feeling

The reader is not alone with his dissatisfaction with the present crop of senators. I have received countless letters to the editor condemning the senators for their disorderly conduct. The words the writers have used to describe the senators do not meet the standards of "political correctness" of this newspaper.

Even the INQUIRER editors who are already used to reports of political maneuverings are exasperated with the events in the Senate. If the walls of the conference room where the day's stories are discussed have ears and lips, the stories they may tell will not be flattering to the people who project themselves as the more mature members of the legislature.

If I had my way, I would impose some sort of a news blackout on the Senate. I would limit the news reports to the discussion of pending bills and the legislative measures that have been approved. I would not waste precious newsprint and ink on statements or press releases that are aimed at further inflating the already swollen egos of some senators.

What's happening in the Senate is probably reflective of the quality of our senators. In the words of columnist Neal Cruz, the people who call themselves the successors of Claro M. Recto, Jose P. Laurel, Jose W. Diokno are "not even fit to touch the socks of those Filipino statesmen."

Unfortunately, the editor in chief does not agree with my stand. While she is similarly sick and tired of the antics of our lawmakers, she believes the INQUIRER is obliged to inform the public of the events in the Senate even if, in the process, the news reports ruin the readers' day.

She explained that through the Senate reports, the readers are given the information they need to make a sound evaluation of the performance of the people they elected to the Upper Chamber. Hopefully, come 2004, they will use this information in deciding who to elect as senators or who to reject if any of the senators involved run for reelection.

She also stated that the senators do affect, directly or indirectly, our lives. If they pass stupid laws, it is we who eventually suffer. (This remark reminded me of the stupid Lina Law on squatters.) The bottom line is the senators are newsmakers and therefore cannot be ignored for purposes of news reporting.

Having heard the editor in chief's side on the complaint, my advice to the reader is to skip the part of the newspaper that reports on the antics of the senators and focus his attention on the more worthwhile reports.

Rejected articles

Now, let's go to something lighter. This time, it's about the complaint of a budding writer about the INQUIRER's handling of the articles submitted for publication in the Youngblood section.

The reader, Jeff MS, said he earlier "sent a humble contribution to Youngblood. I suppose it did not pass the exacting standards of the editors as the article was never published after some months.

"If I could make a suggestion, would it be possible that you send 'rejection notes' to the contributors? An alternative measure would be to give a specific time frame when contributors could remain hopeful that their articles would be published. For example, if an article does not get published after two months, it should mean that it was rejected.

"You see, no matter how the articles fall short of your requirements, the articles are precious masterpieces to the young writers. Knowing that the INQUIRER rejected their articles, they could then improve them or send them to another newspaper.

"Waiting amidst uncertainty is no doubt a more painful experience than expressed rejection."

Before I bring up the Opinion editor's side on the reader's complaint, let me say that I know how it feels to submit articles to a newspaper and not know if they have been accepted or rejected. I had a fair share of rejections before a nationally circulated magazine published one of my articles.

The editor admitted that a notice of rejection should be sent to the writers whose articles failed to meet the INQUIRER's standards. But the problem is he does not have an assistant who can compile the rejected articles, prepare rejection notes and mail them to their writers.

The Youngblood section receives an average of seven articles a day, Monday to Sunday, in hard copy and e-mail form. On top of this load, some 40 letters to the editor go through the editor's desk. This does not include the articles submitted for the Highblood section.

Considering the volume of submitted articles and letters to the editor, the staff of the Opinion section has its hands full attending to the regular task of preparing the contents of the section. Sending rejection notices is difficult to squeeze into the staff's heavy workload.

But the story is different for articles that come with self-addressed and pre-stamped envelopes. If the articles are rejected, they are immediately stuffed back into the enclosed envelope and returned to their writers.

Word of advice to budding Youngblood writers, please take the extra effort of including a self-addressed envelope in your article so you can get back the product of literary talents in case they do not pass muster.

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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What to do with the BIR?

RECENTLY calls have been made by solons for the head of Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Rene Bañez. Newspaper reports are quoting fiscal managers appearing to push for sanctions against Bañez for the failure of government to meet its budget deficit target. They have been citing dismal collection figures of the bureau as enough reason to let the ax fall.

Let us sort the facts from the political hysteria. The tempting question is whether BIR collections really fell short as far as the 2002 target is concerned. The more reasonable query however is whether the target is valid or not.

The Development Budget and Coordinating Council (DBCC) sets the revenue forecast of government every year. Unfortunately, the revenue forecasting we have is a bit in the Flintstone era, with few of the Neda, DOF, DBM, and BSP people (composing the DBCC) agreeing on the formula and assumptions to use. It is more of revenue targeting than forecasting. The former is wishful thinking. The latter is grounded on solid empirical basis.

But why is the 17-percent revenue target for this year unrealistic? Simple. The bureau is weakened by the disease perpetrated by three conniving organisms: tax evaders, the so-called "brokers" composed of unscrupulous tax lawyers and tax accountants, and thirdly, corrupt BIR employees. It is erroneous to say that BIR is corrupt. The tax evader is responsible for feeding the virulent disease.

So has anybody discovered the cure for the disease. It appears the situation is so grave already to merit a major surgery, nay, body parts replacement. A bill was recently filed in Congress calling for the abolition of the BIR and the establishment of an "independent revenue management authority."

Among others, the bill seeks to depoliticize revenue collection. It provides for building a "corporate board" of fiscal managers and private sector representatives to whom the chief executive officer will be fully accountable. Not to legislators to whom the Commissioner must humble himself every budget season, while finding polite ways to refuse all sorts of congressional requests.

The bill also addresses the need to strengthen tax administration by providing for an institution where competence would flourish. Where accountability and flexibility through fixed contract systems will ensure that its people will meet their deliverables. It is designed to attract the best and the brightest people to work for government.

The merits of this bill ought to preoccupy the minds of solons like Saludo, Padilla and Villarama. Reforming tax administration is too vital to nation-building. It is estimated that we lose about P250 billion in collectible taxes every year due to corruption and tax evasion. Collecting only half of that is enough to wipe out the budget deficit. The government cannot begin to address poverty under a regime of budget deficit.

—F.K. CORONEL, volunteer, Walang Ku-Corrupt Campaign,
http//www.walangkucorrupt.ph

LETTERS

Airline passengers' complaint fully investigated

WE write to protest Mr. Conrad Banal's portrayal of Emirates Airline in his column of July 18 as an airline that practices racial discrimination toward its passengers and shabbily treats its Filipino passengers. This is totally false and is belied by our well-documented reputation for excellence in customer service all over the world.

As basis for his attack, Mr. Banal is evidently referring to the claims of mistreatment of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Yap during an Emirates flight from Dubai to Manila on April 7 this year.

The incident stemmed from an unfortunate misunderstanding between Mr. Yap and another passenger seated in the seat behind him. Mr. Yap wanted to recline his seat but he could not fully do so because it was being blocked by the knees of the other passenger who was very tall. The problem could have been easily and reasonably resolved through the mediation of our flight crew. Sadly, the incident was blown out of proportion.

As a result of the incident, Mr. Yap's blood pressure apparently increased and he took medication. A London-based nurse on board responded to our call for medical assistance.

We hoped that the incident, while regrettable, would be set aside by all concerned. However, we received a letter of complaint from a lawyer representing Mr. and Mrs. Yap claiming damages on behalf of his clients for a substantial sum of money and threatening to commence legal proceedings.

Emirates has denied all liability to Mr. and Mrs. Yap arising out of this matter and, to date, the threatened legal action has not occurred.

Upon receiving a letter of complaint, Emirates carried out a thorough investigation and review of the incident to determine whether there was basis for the demand. In this review, we found that the flight crew acted properly and with due respect and regard for Mr. and Mrs. Yap.

We deem it only fitting that we also place on record Emirates policy on customer service and safety which we accord to all passengers, and our record of service specifically to Filipino passengers since we began flights to and from Manila in 1990.

Contrary to Mr. Banal's statements, Emirates crew members are fully trained professionals. They are carefully selected from all over the world, including the Philippines. They represent 85 different nationalities and are trained in techniques and procedures on service and safety.

—GIGIE BAROA,
Area manager, Philippines
Emirates

Irrelevant to Philippine society

IT normally would make me proud to be part of a valedictory address of a senator, even if what was mentioned about me was not complimentary, if only that valedictory address did not have to go through paid ads to make it to newspapers that people read.

But I should have expected it anyway because Mr. Ople has long been irrelevant to Philippine society and developed some value only as a potential tie-breaker to a Senate deadlock. Even there, history passed him by as a younger colleague entered the ranks of the majority without having a price tag on his difficult decision.

I have to depend, as always, on the sense of fairness and generosity of media outlets and practitioners to have my side aired against the hundreds of thousands of pesos spent to buy full-page ads just to print a valedictory address which otherwise would have passed as absolutely meaningless to the Filipino people. But that is all it takes—one concerned patriot to take on an unproductive public official whose greatest claim to fame is faithfully serving and going down with two disgraceful and deposed masters.

When I and Copa objected to the recruitment of Mr. Ople as the new Secretary of Foreign Affairs, something that was initially denied by the administration, it was not because of his being an Amboy. It was because he did not deserve the position from his skill as diplomat and his understanding of geopolitics or from his political alliances and stature. It was Ople's choice and not mine to serve a dictator and lobby for him even as American helicopters were flying him out of Malacañang. It was Ople's choice to make little or defend the public scandals of Estrada by asking that Teofisto Guingona be expelled from the Senate after accusing Ople's master of being the lord of all gambling lords. It has been Ople's choice, and not the people's, to miss the higher calling of public officials of transcending partisanship when a nation's values are at stake. And it remains Ople's choice to remain defiant and unrepentant for serving two masters repudiated by people power.

Mr. Ople said much of his accomplishments in being a student of the history of the United States and of his library stacked with books related to American history. He graciously mentioned being a friend of China, Japan and the European Union. He still misses the point despite his almost overripe age.

He does not understand that the primary requirement of being the nation's top diplomat is not his academic knowledge of the political evolution of other countries but his intimacy with his own country's history. What is the relevance of a senior Filipino public official's grasp of the American revolution when he is not grounded on the Kartilya, the Dekalogo?

Who is Ople's master, America or the Philippines?

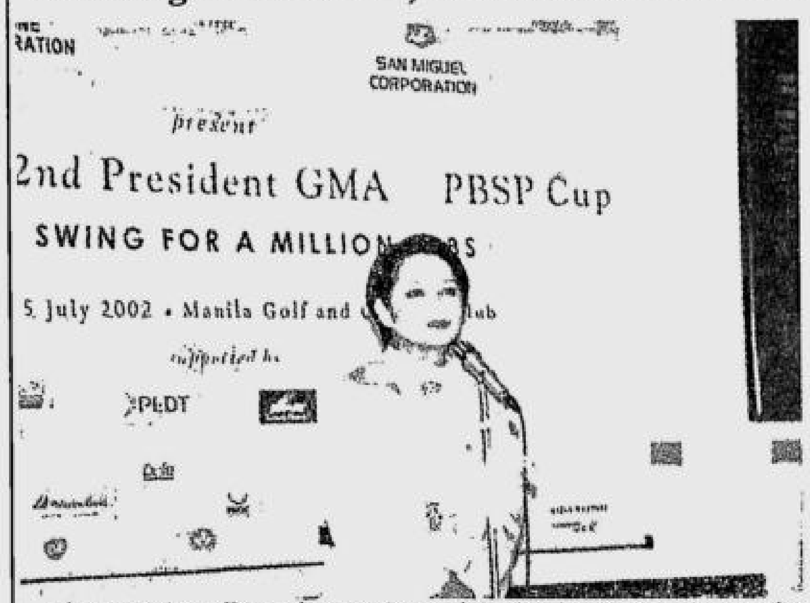
I am proud to be in the company of Amando Doronila, a journalist I respect despite his occasional swipes at me and Copa. Mr. Doronila has reached a stature of great respect in his profession, admired by colleagues and readers alike for his integrity and intelligence, while Mr. Ople does not rank anywhere close to being a role model in his profession, either from colleagues or from the citizenry.

And I have wondered how our transparency as consistent and public critics of dictatorships and plunder can be alluded to as shadowy, while individuals like Mr. Ople who aided and abetted the worst of Philippine leaders can pass himself off as a person of integrity, probity, nationalism and patriotism.

But my own question is answered by the fact that a paid advertisement had to be resorted to, a mute testimony of the level of relevance and importance of Mr. Ople to the Filipino people.

—PASTOR "BOY" SAYCON

My working agenda for the coming year will focus on creating and improving job opportunities. Citizens with rewarding jobs paying decent wages constitute not just a stone in the edifice but the very foundation of a strong republic."—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo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PLDT

The 2nd President GMA-PBSP Cup

Business gives all-out support to A Million Jobs

A sage once said that it is better to be like an old stone block hidden in the foundations, under the ground where no one can see than be like the gilded weather vane on top of a great building. Because of the stone blocks which serve as strong, solid foundation, the house will not fall.

When President Macapagal-Arroyo anchored her economic agenda on improving human capital as key to winning the war against poverty in her recent State of the Nation Address (SONA), she identified the essential building blocks for her administration. Job creation, which admittedly takes more time, effort and persevering work in this time of crisis, was mandated by the President in her first SONA. After a year, statistics and reports showed that efforts which have empowered the underserved communities with sustainable jobs are reinforcing the foundations of President Arroyo's strong republic.

In the recently concluded fundraising golf tournament dubbed The *2nd President GMA-PBSP Cup*, more than 100 business leaders of top Philippine corporations gathered at the Manila Golf and Country Club and raised ₱15.75 million in support of the government's *A Million Jobs* Program. During the opening of the tournament President Arroyo said, "*To create jobs, we need to have a business environment that is good for investments. Many of the things that you need in your business environment need a strong republic. For instance, peace and order. A strong republic is not an end in itself but a means to create more jobs.*"

Presidential Adviser on Creating One Million Jobs and Chairman of the Golf Committee, Luis P. Lorenzo, Jr., in addressing the participating businessmen in the recent tournament said, "*Standing in front of you and looking at the Manila Golf landscape, one does not realize just how difficult life is in many of the poorer areas of Metro Manila, which can be very close to where we live or where we work. We have to examine and see what we can do to help.*"

The President welcomed by PBSP Trustees, (L-R): Cito Lorenzo, Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio, Oscar Lopez and Marixi Prieto.

Having achieved significant gains in the battle against poverty in Mindanao where the proceeds of the 1st President GMA-PBSP Cup were allocated, this year's benefit golfest, which was organized by the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP), hopes to accomplish even more when it takes on the challenge of helping bridge the gap in the ranks of the unemployed.

Several corporations have been generous in their support to the cause. The presenting sponsors of The 2nd President GMA - PBSP Cup were First Philippine Holdings Corporation and San Miguel Corporation. Major sponsors were: PLDT, Smart, Unilab and Citra. Hole sponsors were: Del Monte, Dole Asia Ltd., J. Cunanan, Nestlé, EDC, Petron, SGV & Co., Shell, Aboitiz & Co., Landbank, Monsanto, PNOC and RCBC. Jardine Matheson and PHINMA also participated.

EDC team led by Chairman Sergio Apostol was the tournament Champion.

Media Partner was Philippine Daily Inquirer and Hole-In-One sponsor was Toyota. Prize sponsors were PAL and Northwest.

A MARKET-ORIENTED APPROACH

"*It's really a market-oriented attempt to create jobs... initially, agri and food-based efforts, in the countryside,*" said Lorenzo when asked about the achievement of *A Million Jobs* team which as of last count, has reported 810,149 jobs generated in the agriculture sector.

These gains, admits Lorenzo, would not have been accomplished without the active collaboration of many institutions. Among others, Landbank and QuedanCor spearheaded aggressive innovative lending programs that set many of the livelihood projects in the agriculture sector in motion while a number of corporations also got involved. For instance, Nestlé and San Miguel Corporation worked closely with the team to facilitate job creation in the coffee and cassava production. In the end, what caused jobs to be created in agriculture is the availability and delivery of credit to farmers and the flow of private sector investments.

AN ALTERNATIVE CREDIT FINANCING

The core of PBSP's initiatives rests on building communities that can manage and sustain their growth. In expanding the capabilities of economically challenged communities in the urban sector for enterprise development, the *A Million Jobs* team, in cooperation with PBSP and QuedanCor, taps the potential of female entrepreneurs engaged in micro-enterprises such as *sari-sari* stores, garments and houseware. Through micro-financing, PBSP hopes to make the beneficiaries more productive and their business more economically viable.

"*The amount raised from the tournament will be leveraged to P63 million, by churning out P10,000 packages for every borrower with an interest rate of 16 % per annum, a rate which is actually a lot better than the 36 to 49 % that micro-finance companies offer. These ladies, who are organized in groups of 15, elect a leader for each team. The leader then receives 25% of the collection to serve as an incentive. Through this set-up, we are selling and actualizing hope to these entrepreneurs. To date, we have already trained 12,000 of them,*" explains Lorenzo.

A unique feature of this alternative credit financing introduced by QuedanCor is the additional P10,000 which every borrower can avail. Known as a *lifeline*, this added mechanism gives the entrepreneur access to more credit in times of emergency, thus, avoiding the need to approach the informal sector which usually gives atrocious charging rates.

TEACH A MAN HOW TO FISH

Inspired by the time-honored parable on teaching a man how to fish instead of subsisting on dole-outs, PBSP spearheads not just livelihood projects in various communities but also supports social infrastructure projects such as community organizing, partnership-building and training and environmental protection/regeneration.

PBSP has a concept of development that goes beyond giving welfare contributions to communities in need. It teaches people how they can do better in life and essentially encourage them to become not just self-sufficient individuals but entrepreneurs as well.

"*Linking up with PBSP results in tremendous synergy, since business can concentrate on its primary function of pursuing business, while PBSP provides coordination and lead in social development. First Holdings sees it beneficial to support government-private sector cooperation in jobs creation, specifically the female entrepreneurs engaged in micro-enterprises. Our involvement, hopefully, sends a message to other businesses that corporate social responsibility should not be sacrificed, but instead maintained, or better still, expanded, in the face of an economic slowdown.,*" First Philippine Holdings Corporation Chair & CEO Oscar M. Lopez said.

2nd President GMA PB
SWING FOR A MILLION JOBS
Presidential Adviser on Creating One Million Jobs Luis P. Lorenzo informs sponsors about the beneficiaries of the tournament.

"*One of the ways that we think we can be effective in reaching out is through the network and infrastructure of PBSP. It's a good alliance - instead of setting up our own organization, we'd rather work with social development experts,*" explains Carlos Ejercito, President of United Laboratories (Unilab), a major sponsor of the tournament.

Her Excellency with the supporters and guests of The 2nd President GMA - PBSP Cup, L-R: Nicasio Alcantara, Sergio Apostol, OV Espiritu, Rudy Cuenca, Cito Lorenzo, Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio, Marixi Prieto, Oscar Lopez and Juan Santos.

Today, PBSP is the largest business-led social development foundation in the Philippines and perhaps the only one of its kind in Asia. Corporate commitments from its member companies are translated to social development in very concrete terms.

"*The management of PBSP has been quite innovative in trying to create a multiplier effect, not just on the resources at hand, but on the value and impact of the work done,*" adds Oscar Reyes, former PBSP Trustee and Chairman and CEO of Shell, one of the sponsors of the tournament.

With an active board consisting of 21 CEOs providing policy direction that complement the work of full time, professional staff who are engaged in many projects nationwide, PBSP has already reached 2.8 million beneficiaries from the time of its inception in the early '70's.

"*The contributions of PBSP would look so small when viewed against the entire country's poverty problem. Nonetheless, the board and its membership remain hopeful that whatever strides it has made might inspire others to follow suit,*" said Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio, PBSP President.

For the founders of PBSP, Corporate Citizenship is not an option, but a responsibility to help people help themselves. It is not only through monetary contribution that the business sector can assist the marginalized sector of society, but through sharing competencies it possesses to succeed in facing the challenge of helping the poor. Through this emanates the hope to alleviate poverty, unleash human potential and ultimately, achieve social development. ✱

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

China: Independent Taiwan won't be tolerated

BEIJING—China said Sunday it would never tolerate an independent Taiwan in response to a call by Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian for a referendum on the future of the island that Beijing considers a renegade province.

"There is only one China in the world and the mainland and Taiwan are both a part of China," a foreign ministry spokesperson said.

"The separation of China's sovereignty and territorial integrity will never be tolerated."

The spokesperson was commenting on defiant remarks made by Chen on Saturday in which he maintained the island's right to hold a referendum on possible Taiwan independence.

"Taiwan's future and destiny can only be decided by the 23 million people living on the island," Chen said in a teleconference with the pro-independence overseas Taiwanese association in Tokyo.

"But how to make the decision when the time comes? The answer is what (we) have sought after—referendum," he told the group.

He also stressed Taiwan's statehood and independent sovereignty, saying that "each side (of the Taiwan Strait) is a country."

"Taiwan cannot be bullied, dwarfed, marginalized or regionalized. Taiwan is not part of another country, nor is it a regional government or a province."

The foreign ministry spokesperson added that a more formal response would be issued by the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, China's Cabinet.

Officials at the Taiwan Affairs Office were not immediately available for comment Sunday.

The spokesperson refused to comment on the possibility that Chen's remarks were aimed at stirring up debate on Taiwan ahead of a key mainland Chinese Communist Party congress later this year in which prominent leadership changes are expected to take place.

Although political opposition is rarely voiced openly in the murky world of mainland politics, Chinese President Jiang Zemin's repeated vow to use force to retake Taiwan has been seen in some quarters as destablizing mainland efforts to develop its economy and raise living standards, analysts said.

By ratcheting up tensions in the Taiwan Strait, Chen Shui-bian would appear to be mimicking mainland war games and saber-rattling that preceded Taiwan's last two presidential elections and which were widely seen as attempts by Beijing to influence the Taiwan electorate, they said.

Meanwhile Sunday, the mainland press failed to report on Chen's comments, although most papers carried remarks made Saturday by foreign ministry spokesperson Kong Quan in which he slammed a US bill that describes Taiwan as an ally.

"Taiwan is part of China and absolutely not a 'dependency,'" Kong was quoted by the People's Daily as saying.

The "2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recover From and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States" violated the "one China principle" to which Washington has agreed to, he said. *AFP*

Koreas agree to resume talks after 9-month interregnum

SEOUL—North and South Korea agreed on Sunday to reopen high-level talks next week in a major step toward getting their reconciliation process back on track after a nine-month hiatus.

In another sign that relations between the Koreas might be thawing, North Korea also promised to participate in a regional sports competition being hosted next month by its southern rival.

Delegates from the two sides issued a joint statement after three days of working-level meetings at a mountain resort in North Korea.

It called for the two sides to hold Cabinet-level talks in Seoul on Aug. 12-14 that will be the first between Korean ministers since November. Ties deteriorated after US President George W. Bush in January called North Korea part of an "axis of evil" nations trying to develop weapons of mass destruction.

The Koreas have held six rounds of Cabinet-level negotiations since their leaders met for the first time in the summer of 2000.

North Korea said it would participate in the 14th Asian Games, to be held in South Korea's southern port city of Busan on Sept. 29-Oct. 14, the joint statement said. The offer is significant because the isolated communist state until now shunned major international sporting events in South Korea, including this year's soccer World Cup.

South Korea will "provide active cooperation and support" for the North Korean delegation taking part in the Busan Games and for a North Korean soccer team that will travel to Seoul in early September for a friendly match, the statement said.

Next week's talks will focus on more reunions of family members separated by the Korean War, a plan to reconnect a cross-border rail line and joint inter-Korean economic projects in the impoverished North, it said.

An analyst in Seoul said North Korea's dire economic situation left it no choice but to negotiate with the South, a major source of aid.

"North Korea realizes anew that time is not on its side," said Paek Hak-soon, of the independent Sejong Research Institute. "It needs better ties with South Korea, the United States and Japan to rebuild its decrepit economy." *AP*

Malaysia nabs 17 opposition party members

KUALA LUMPUR—Police arrested 17 opposition party activists—including a prominent member of Parliament—at a crowded marketplace Sunday as they handed out leaflets criticizing Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, officials said.

The arrests came as the Democratic Action Party, Malaysia's main ethnic Chinese opposition group, stepped up a campaign demanding assurances that the rights of non-Muslim minorities would be safeguarded.

Police detained party members as they gave out pamphlets and chatted with housewives at a vegetable market in Bentong district, 50 km east of Kuala Lumpur, said party spokesperson Ronnie Liu.

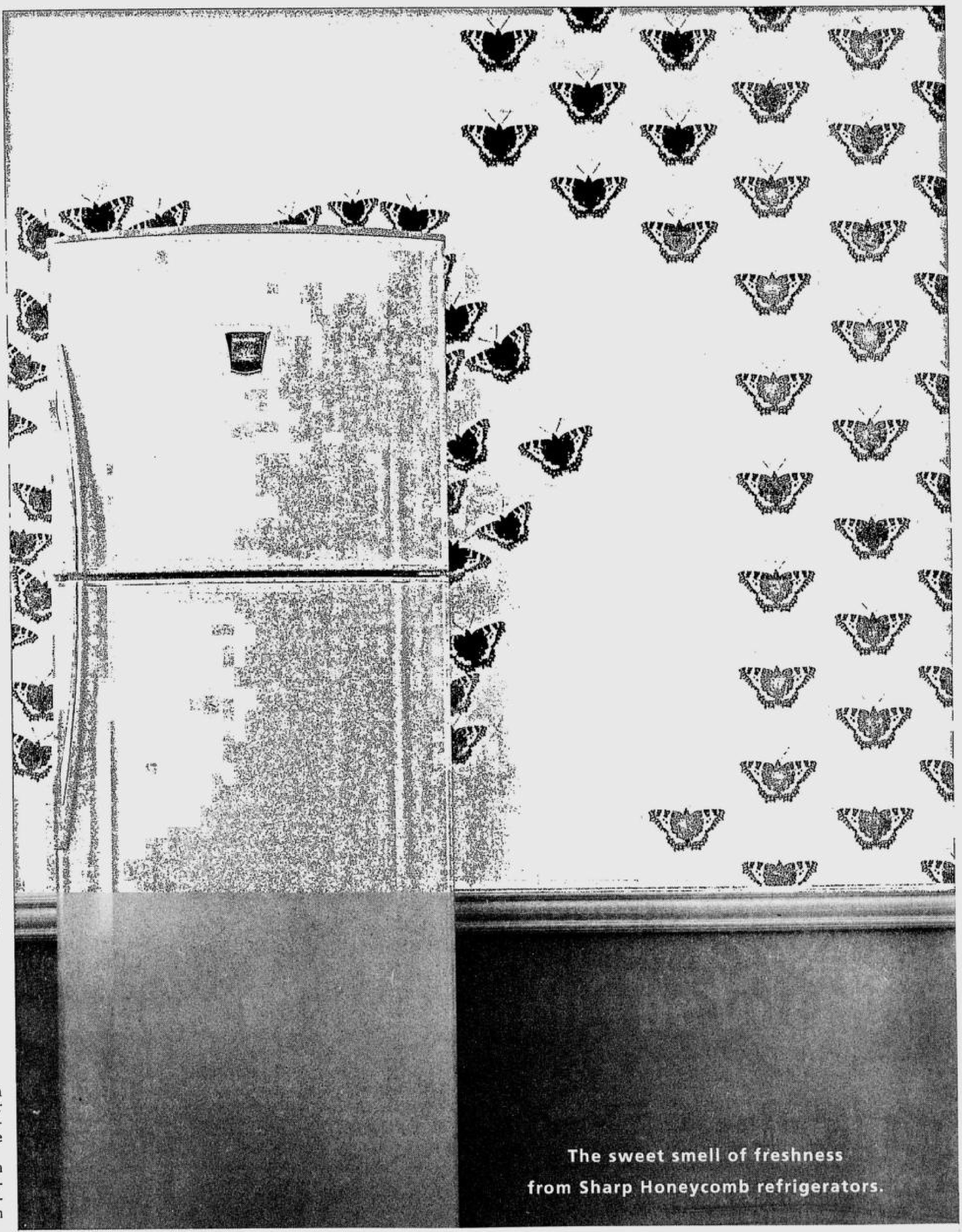
Malaysia's youngest member of Parliament, Fong Po Kuan, was among those detained for about four hours at the district police headquarters, Liu said. They were released on bail of 1,000 ringgit ($263) each and were warned they could be charged with sedition later, Liu said.

"We are very unhappy about these arrests," Liu said. "The police are harassing Malaysians who conduct legitimate political activities."

A police spokesperson confirmed the arrests, but declined to elaborate.

The party's senior leader, Lim Kit Siang, has been arrested twice since June for distributing the leaflets, which criticize Mahathir's remarks last year that Malaysia was "in effect" an Islamic state.

Lim—one of Mahathir's oldest political rivals and a respected figure among the large ethnic Chinese minority—was detained for several hours in separate towns for sedition, but has not been formally charged. *AP*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Tape shows firemen reached crash zone

NEW YORK—A tape of emergency radio transmissions on Sept. 11 shows that firefighters reached the burning 78th floor of the south tower where the jetliner sliced through, nearly 30 floors higher than officials had estimated.

Four people who have listened to the tape said at least two firefighters reached the crash site and were helping the injured, The New York Times reported for Sunday editions.

The 78-minute tape was found in the rubble months ago but was not played until fire officials signed a confidentiality agreement.

The agreement was requested because the tape might be used as evidence in the trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, accused of conspiracy in the Sept. 11 attacks. Moussaoui, who faces the death penalty, has said he is a loyal member of al-Qaida but denies a role in Sept. 11.

Officials had thought that firefighters had not climbed higher than the 50th floor in either tower. United Flight 175 crashed into the south tower between the 78th and 84th floors. American Airlines Flight 11 sliced through the north tower near the 91st floor.

Most of the transmissions on the tape came from the south tower.

The fire department has identified the voices of at least 16 firefighters on the recording, and the families were invited to listen to the tape Friday after signing confidentiality agreements. *AP*

Israelis dynamite 9 homes in West Bank

NABLUS, West Bank—The Israeli Army early Sunday blew up nine houses in the West Bank belonging to families of Palestinians who carried out anti-Israel attacks, sources close to the families said.

There was no immediate confirmation from the Israeli Army.

Six of the houses were in the north of the West Bank, two near Nablus, where the Army has been carrying out a major search operation for activists in the past three days. The other two were in Hebron, in the south of the West Bank.

In the village of Taluza, north of Nablus, the Army dynamited the house of the family of Mashour Hasaideh, a member of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an armed offshoot of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. He carried out a suicide bomb attack in west Jerusalem on March 21 in which three people died.

In the village of Tel, south of Nablus, the Army destroyed the house of the family of Assem Rihan, a member of the armed wing of Hamas, who died in a suicide bomb attack on an Israeli bus. *AP*

Saddam will collapse under US onslaught, say experts

CAIRO—For all its bluster in the face of the possibility Washington will use military means to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, his regime would collapse under a US onslaught, military experts in the region say.

Retired Gen. Salah Halaby, Egypt's former chief of staff, said in an interview that the Iraqi Army was too weak and demoralized after the 1991 Gulf War and years of doing without new weapons "to be a serious match to the US troops and their smart weapons."

"The Iraqi Army has no chance whatsoever to stand steadfast and will fall like a castle of sand," said Halaby, who commanded Egyptian forces in the US-led international coalition that drove Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991.

The comments by Halaby and other Arab experts came as the US Senate foreign relations committee conducted hearings in Washington on a possible military attack on Iraq. Those hearings raised the prospect that US forces might have to stay in Iraq for some time should the country fall apart if Saddam is ousted.

Military experts in the Middle East and witnesses at the Washington hearings both warned of one danger should US forces attack Saddam—that he would respond by using any available weapons of mass destruction on American forces, countries that were used to launch the US onslaught or Israel.

Halaby said that he believed Iraq's military would take a US attack as an opportunity to turn on Saddam, who led Iraq into Kuwait and might be blamed by his men for the bitter defeat that followed.

"I have no doubt that once the Iraqi Army has the opportunity to pounce on Saddam, it will do it without any hesitation, because this Army has been humiliated in the Gulf War and it wants to revenge its honor," Halaby said.

He offered no views on who would lead the country should Saddam be ousted, but Iraqi Army commanders who have defected are among those working closely with the United States to draw up plans for a government in post-Saddam Iraq.

Former Iraqi Gen. Wafiq al-Samarraei, who defected in 1995, said US strategy should focus completely on Saddam. Once he is killed or caught, "the job is finished," al-Samarraei said from London in a telephone interview.

Al-Samarraei, who worked as head of Iraqi Army intelligence during the Gulf War, said the likelihood that Iraq would use chemical weapons or other weapons of mass destruction would increase if the US military operation took too long.

During the Gulf War, Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel and a few others at Saudi Arabia, where US troops were stationed, but the missiles carried only conventional warheads.

Iraqi officials regularly boast that the country's forces are ready for any attack and would defeat invading troops. *AP*

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, August 5, 2002
18th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Jer 28:1-17
Gospel: Mt 14:22-36

After the crowds had eaten their fill, Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the crowd away.

And having sent the people away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. At nightfall, he was there alone. Meanwhile, the boat was very far from land, dangerously rocked by the waves for the wind was against it.

At daybreak, Jesus came to them walking on the lake. When they saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, thinking that it was a ghost. And they cried out in fear. But at once Jesus said to them, "Courage! Don't be afraid. It's me!" Peter answered, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you walking on the water."

Jesus said to him, "Come." And Peter got out of the boat, walking on the water to go to Jesus. But, in face of the strong wind, he was afraid and began to sink. So he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and took hold of him, saying, "Man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

As they got into the boat, the wind dropped. Then those in the boat bowed down before Jesus saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God!"

They came ashore at Gennesareth. The local people recognized Jesus and spread the news throughout the region. So they brought all the sick to him, begging him to let them touch just the fringe of his cloak. All who touched it became perfectly well.

Commentary

French philosopher Camus in a drama entitled "Caligula" tells us that most of us never reach our goal in life because of two reasons: First of all because of "lack of will"; we are dispersed, disturbed, distracted and so unable make up our mind and to set a clear goal. Second because of "relationships" based only on emotions, sentiments that can change with the wind. Peter, recognizing that it was the Lord, was able to walk on the waters towards Jesus, but became distracted from his goal for fear of the wind, he doubted and faltered. We too need to walk over the troubled waters of life; let us not lose sight of our goal, the Lord, nor change direction easily. Let not fear nor lack of determination or distracting relationships make us doubt and fall.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Grave abuse of discretion—By grave abuse of discretion is meant such capricious and whimsical exercise of judgment which is equivalent to an excess or lack of jurisdiction. The abuse of discretion must be so patent and gross as to amount to an evasion of a positive duty or a virtual refusal to perform a duty enjoined by law, or to act at all in contemplation off law as where the power is exercised in an arbitrary and despotic manner by reason of passion or hostility. In its decision holding that the municipal court has jurisdiction over the case and that private respondent was not stopped from questioning the jurisdiction of the Regional Trial Court, respondent Court of Appeals discussed the facts on which its decision is grounded as well as the law and jurisprudence on the matter. Its action was neither whimsical nor capricious. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, Duero v. Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 131282, January 4, 2002]

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3. Abdulwahid, Hakim S.
4. Adanzo, Felix P.
5. Alegre, Zosimo G.
6. Andrade, Amalia Resterio
7. Annang, Raymundo Z.
8. Arizala, Gregorio A.
9. Aspi, Feliciano A.
10. Bagalacsa, Lore V.
11. Baldos, Teresita Diaz
12. Ballutay, Johnson L.
13. Barinaga, Sylvia Luczon
14. Basilla,Henry B.
15. Bay, Teodoro A.
16. Bersamin, Lucas P.
17. Cabado, Rodolfo V.
18. Cabredo, Arnulfo B.
19. Canonizado, Alexis C.
20. Carandang, Rosmari Declaro
21. Chiongson, Roberto S.
22. Chiu, Eleuterio E.
23. Co, Alicia Mariño
24. Cortes, Ma. Aurora Pojun
25. Cuerdo, Caridad Grecia
26. Cueva, Eulogia Makabenta
27. Cuñada, Alvin B.
28. Decano, Alicia Gonzalez
29. Deloria, Merlin D.
30. Diamante, Franchito N.
31. Domondon, Abelardo T.
32. Erum, Bernardita Gabitan
33. Escobido, Jose L.
34. Estoesta,Cecilio O.
35. Eugenio, Antonio M. Jr.
36. Exevea, Apolinario G.
37. Fernandez, Rumoldo R.
38. Flores,Teresita Dy-Liacco
39. Francisco, Raymundo T.
40. Hernandez, Jose R.
41. Herrera, Oscar C. Jr.
42. Kintanar, Oliveros E.
43. Lagman, Aurora, Santiago
44. Lantion, Jane Aurora Catabian
45. Lanzanas, Enrico A.
46. Laqui, Hilario L.
47. Laurea, Emmanuel D.
48. Lontok, Arcangelita Romilla
49. Lopez, Romulo A.
50. Macapagal, Demetrio B. Sr.
51. Madarang, Ramiro R.
52. Magdoza, Pablo R.
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The public may submit any sworn complaint, written report or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants/recommendees, **not later than Friday, August 16, 2002**, to:

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Burma junta says relations with Suu Kyi much better now

RANGOON—Relations between Burma's military regime and the political opposition led by Aung San Suu Kyi have improved vastly in the last 1 1/2 years, a senior junta official told the visiting Japanese foreign minister Sunday.

Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, the No. 3 leader in the regime, also told Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi that the reconciliation process between the government and Suu Kyi is on track, a Japanese diplomat said.

Khin Nyunt and Kawaguchi held nearly two hours of talks on the second day of her visit, the first by a Japanese foreign minister to Burma in 19 years.

Khin Nyunt told Kawaguchi that there had been contacts between "ministerial-level officials" and top leaders of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, and that the 1991 Nobel peace laureate was present at some of the meetings, the diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

The diplomat did not say if Khin Nyunt meant that the talks were held after Suu Kyi's release from house arrest on May 6 or if he was referring to meetings held while she was still in detention.

Suu Kyi has expressed concern that she has not had a single meeting with the ruling generals since her release.

The current junta came to power in 1988 after crushing pro-democracy demonstrations, and annulled the results of a 1990 election that was won by the National League for Democracy. It jailed several of the party's leaders and suppressed all political activity.

Suu Kyi herself spent much of the last 14 years under house arrest, the latest stretch lasting 19 months. Her release was secured partly by the efforts of UN special envoy Razali Ismail, who initiated the reconciliation talks in October 2000.

Razali is also in Rangoon at present to provide momentum to the talks. He is scheduled to meet with Kawaguchi later Sunday, the Japanese diplomat said.

He quoted Khin Nyunt as telling Kawaguchi that Suu Kyi's party had "taken a very confrontational stand" for more than a decade after 1988 but that its relations with the junta had "changed for the better since the talks began in 2000."

Khin Nyunt said relations had been "good" for the last year and a half, and added that the government would continue to pursue political dialogue.

Kawaguchi is scheduled to meet with Suu Kyi on Monday, which will make her the highest ranking official from an industrialized nation to meet the opposition leader since her release. *AP*

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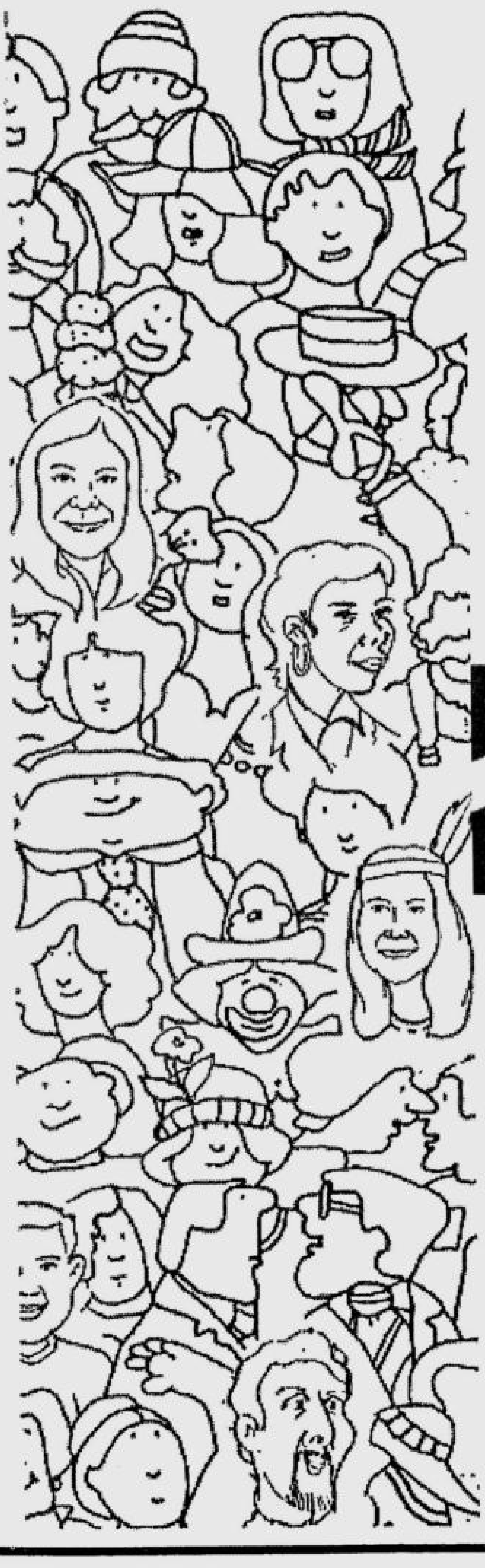

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Dog meat ban urged

HONG KONG—Animal rights activists urged a Hong Kong-based supermarket chain, owned by tycoon Li Ka-shing, to stop selling dog meat in its mainland Chinese branches, a newspaper reported Sunday.

ParknShop sells dog meat in its 20 mainland Chinese branches during winter when demand is high, the South China Morning Post quoted an unidentified company spokesperson as saying. She did not provide further comment.

Many Chinese eat dog meat during winter, believing that the meat keeps them warm and healthy. Traditionally, the meat from a black dog was the most prized because it was thought to drive away evil spirits.

The report quoted Animals Asia Foundation founder Jill Robinson as saying the chain should stop the sale of dog meat in China, where she said a dog's penis is regarded as an aphrodisiac. *AP*

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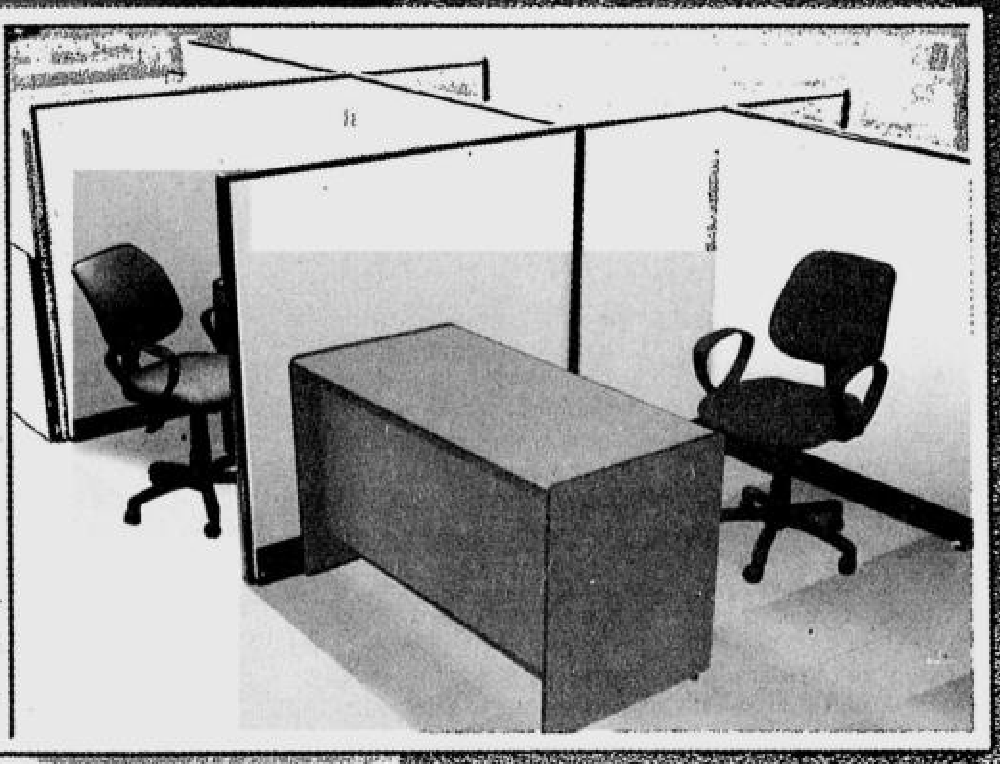

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Treatment for dog bites draining Misamis funds

OROQUIETA CITY—Medical assistance to victims of dog bites in Misamis Occidental is draining government funds, which could have been diverted to other projects.

There was no exact data available as to the number of dog bites in the whole province but the problem was becoming too serious, according to officials.

This year, at least two children were confirmed dead after a rabid dog bit them in Tangub City.

A board member said that for the past two months alone, he disbursed some P100,000 for anti-rabies medicines.

Board member Morpheus Agot disclosed that victims who could not afford the expensive anti-rabies vaccine have repeatedly sought his help.

Board member Dello Lood agreed by saying that the limited volume of anti-rabies vaccine in government hospitals has become a problem for most victims and their families.

Most of the bite victims, he said, could hardly afford anti-rabies vaccines.

A vial of the vaccine costs about P1,000 in commercial pharmacies.

The Provincial Health Office said it was forced to refer families of victims to pharmacies after its anti-rabies vaccine supply was depleted.

Members of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan have recently passed an ordinance banning stray dogs on streets.

Agot also batted for the construction of a holding cell for stray dogs.

He said this could be cheaper than spending for anti-rabies medicines. *Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

New group emerges in war for Mindanao independence

DAVAO CITY—A group calling itself the Bangsamoro Independence Movement (BIM) was launched in Sulu on July 7.

Several Sulu personalities, including a cleric who figured in negotiations for the release of the Sipadan hostages, were confirmed to be behind the group.

Some of its founding members have even invited the INQUIRER to cover their meetings.

But they begged off from being identified so soon for varied reasons.

Based on flyers and leaflets recently distributed by the BIM, the purpose of its inception was "to sustain and continue the century-long struggle for Moro independence, which seems can not be realized by the Moro National Liberation Front (and the) Moro Islamic Liberation Front."

Like the MNLF and the MILF, the BIM said it was envisioning the creation of a Bangsamoro Republic.

From its press releases, it was clear that the BIM was still in the process of consolidating its forces.

It said the BIM has been inviting all the 14 Moro tribes in Mindanao.

"To get their independence back and be united through their bravery under the flag of Islam which was tainted by the colonizers," a recently-distributed BIM statement said.

Aside from inviting the rest of the Bangsamoro to participate in the movement, the BIM said it also wanted to include the Misuari Renegade Group, the MNLF, the MILF and the Abu Sayyaf in its struggle.

"The MNLF and MILF have common agenda which is Bangsamoro Independence. So why can we not join hands and unite for that common cause," the group's chair who only identified himself as Waleed said.

The BIM indicated that it was determined to pursue its vision by armed struggle.

The group claimed that it has more than 350 armed fighters based in Sulu alone under its armed wing, the Bangsamoro Liberation Army (BLA).

"These Bangsamoro fighters proclaimed their attachment to freedom, justice and spiritual values, and their readiness to defend its cause in their homeland and in any part of the world, and to protect all those who are oppressed for its sake. They also affirmed their continuous march towards the goal of independence of the Moroland, and putting an end to all types of goverment other than Islam forever," one of the statements read.

But Lt. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, Southern Command chief, said the existence of the BIM was no more than propaganda.

"It's just like a box and there is nothing in it," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. *Allan A. Nawal with reports from Joselle d.R. Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NGO says GMA fed wrong info again on kidnap leader

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat—Was President Macapagal-Arroyo deliberately fed wrong information about the death of Commander Tropical to further deodorize the stinking police image?

This was the question posed by a non-government organization here to police operatives last week.

Cliff Ampatuan, founding chair and president of the Special Monitoring and Media Action Group (SMMAG), said his group found out that the real Commander Tropical was alive and the man which police claimed was the head of the Abu Sufia gang was but a fall guy.

Ampatuan claimed that Tungku Abdulrahman, whom the police reportedly killed in a 20-minute shootout in Barangay Dansuli here on July 25, was not the kidnap gang leader.

Ms Macapagal announced Abdulrahman's death during her visit to Sarangani province on July 26.

But Ampatuan said the real Commander Tropical was Hadji Abdulgani Omal, who remains at large.

Supt. Bartolome Baluyot branded Ampatuan's claim as preposterous.

"We neutralized Tropical and we are certain of that," Baluyot said.

Tropical was blamed for the abduction of General Santos hotelier Carlos Belonio and Korean national Jae Keon-yoon on March 6 in the boundaries of Sultan Kudarat and Sarangani provinces.

Jae was recently released while Belonio was freed after a few days in captivity.

Ampatuan said the SMMAG was finalizing a report to Ms Macapagal.

Based on his group's findings, there was no shootout in Barangay Dansuli here on July 25 as police had earlier claimed.

"How can there be a shootout when the victim and his three companions were unarmed?" Ampatuan said.

A police report from the Sarangani provincial police command had indicated that police operatives, led by provincial police director Supt. Willie Dangane, figured in a shootout with Abdulrahman's group.

The report added that after the suspect was killed, Dangane and his men arrested three other gang members, identified as Rashid Dudin, Rustom Sumbaga and Salahudin Mopak.

But Sally Pendatun, Mopak's sister, said her brother and the other suspects have no police records.

Pendatun said prior to the supposed shootout, Abdulrahman and Sumbaga, a known martial arts instructor, met with Mayor Alfonso Sincoy of Malapatan, Sarangani.

"I did not know what they were discussing, but I suspect it was something very important because they were serious," she said.

The mayor and five of his companions left after the meeting but returned after a few days.

"They shook hands as the mayor was to leave the house for the second time and I heard Abdulrahman saying I'll have to stay for a little while to pray," she said. *Charlie C. Senase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and central Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 25°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Hi 19°**	Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Hi 31°**	Lo 25°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Hi 30°**	Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Hi 31°**	Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 31°**	Lo 23°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 32°**	Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 31°**	Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 32°**	Lo 25°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 32°**	Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 33°**	Lo 22°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	**Hi 32°**	Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/08/05/02

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Satellite technology helping group wage war on illegal fishing

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—In the hands of determined sea watch volunteers, the global positioning satellite (GPS) is a powerful tool to rid the seas of illegal fishermen.

Members of the Bantay Dagat of Iloilo province aboard patrol crafts fitted with GPS arrested a commercial fishing vessel and its crew off Barotac Viejo town on July 29 for fishing within the municipal waters and using prohibited fishing net.

The sea watch volunteers caught the trawler FB Inday Honey a kilometer off the town's shoreline. They slapped charges against fishing boat Capt. Ricardo Ganza and his crewmembers Gerry Dairo and Mario Duriman.

Charged

They were charged with violation of the Philippine Fisheries Act or Republic Act 8550.

The GPS relies on satellite to determine the location of boats at sea. It helps the Bantay Dagat crew determine whether or not the vessel is within or outside the municipal waters.

The margin of error is some 100 meters. The GPS was given by Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Margin of error

The 50-ton FB Inday Honey is owned by Eduardo Bernasol of Daan Banwa, Victorias City, Negros Occidental.

Except for Dairo, who is from Barotac Viejo town, Iloilo, the rest of the crewmembers are from Victorias City, Negros Occidental.

The three crewmembers were reportedly able to post bail of P14,000 each.

For nabbing FB Inday Honey, Barotac Viejo's Bantay Dagat, lead by Arnel Ramos, received a commendation from Gov. Niel Tupas.

Commendation

Fernando de Castro, chief of fisheries division of the provincial agriculture office, said the fishing boat had no operating license from BFAR.

He said the crew was using a moving fishing net, which scraped the seabed and practically captured all fish along its path.

The RA 8550 bans commercial fishing within the municipal waters, which is 15 kilometers from the shoreline.

The FB Inday Honey is the second haul of Iloilo's sea watch group in less than three months.

In May, the group caught FB Darelen, also from Victoria City, while fishing within the municipal waters of Ajuy town, 91 kilometers north of here. Darelen is owned by Victorias number one Councilor Daniel Tornea.

Super haul boats

The boats were called "super hulbot (super haul boats)" and trawlers using long nets fitting with nets that scraped the seabed.

Trawl nets slightly differ by having a pair of wings or long cloths fluttering on both sides of the nets when dragged underwater.

From January to June there were 120 violators of the fishing law that were haled to court in northern Iloilo, many of them caught fishing within the municipal waters off Carles, Estancia and Balasan, which are among the richest fishing grounds in Western Visayas.

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CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Central Luzon's agricultural sector suffered hard from almost three weeks of floods, incurring losses worth at least P327.995 million or almost the amount lost by the region's rice industry during the drought in 1997 and 1998.

Department of Agriculture officials had proposed a P44.514-million rehabilitation plan to help food producers in the region's six provinces to immediately recover from the disaster.

The fishery sector reported the largest share of losses, which reached P216.115 million from damaged fishpond areas and fingerlings of *tilapia*, *bangus* (milkfish), *sugpo* (prawn) and *tahong* (mussels), largely from Pampanga.

A DA report said the floods destroyed *palay* valued at P81 million in Pampanga, Bataan and Tarlac.

Vegetable producers and livestock growers reported losses worth P16.7 million and P12.7 million. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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P104-M land deal seen straining Lito-Mikey ties

LAPID

ARROYO

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—An unresolved alleged P104-million land scam is expected to strain the "shaky alliance" of Pampanga Gov. Manuel Lapid and Vice Gov. Juan Miguel Arroyo, sources from the provincial capitol said.

The provincial board on Friday submitted to Lapid a copy of Resolution 177 authorizing him to sell the controversial 40 hectares that earned him a graft case before the Sandiganbayan in 1998.

Former Vice Gov. Cielo Macapagal-Salgado, half-sister of President Macapagal-Arroyo, filed the original case accusing Lapid of conspiring with landowners in depriving the provincial government of taxes.

Salgado said the sellers prepared two deeds of sale, submitting only the deed for the purchase price of P5 million to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

She also said the P104 million was disbursed without a voucher and certificate of availability of funds.

Intends to resurrect

According to the source privy to dealings in the provincial board, the resolution "only intends to resurrect" the controversy that faded after the Supreme Court in August last year stopped the Office of the Ombudsman and the Sandiganbayan from further prosecuting the case.

Board Member Ferdinand Labung, an ally of Arroyo, filed the resolution. The board wanted Lapid to sell the "non-performing asset" in Barangay Maimpis and use the proceeds to develop a 22-hectare property in Barangay San Pedro Cutud for a housing project for some 1,500 capitol employees.

The Maimpis property was originally bought for the same purpose.

Labung said he also filed the resolution to stop the provincial government from paying huge interests to the Philippine National Bank for a P130-million loan acquired to buy the property.

Lapid has not publicly supported or rejected the proposal.

Bad luck

Sources in the Lapid camp said the governor did "not want to have any involvement in any transaction" pertaining to the controversial property.

"He had called it *malas* (bad luck) because the transactions got him into trouble," a source said.

The employees would pay less because the lots were already government-owned.

Galang said the employees union would be consulted on Labung's proposal.

The sources said the whole plot involves pitting Lapid and presidential son Arroyo who, they said, had "taken an upper hand" in the control and disposition of resources of the provincial government.

But Arroyo dismissed this, describing himself as a "*bata ni* Gob (a follower of the governor)." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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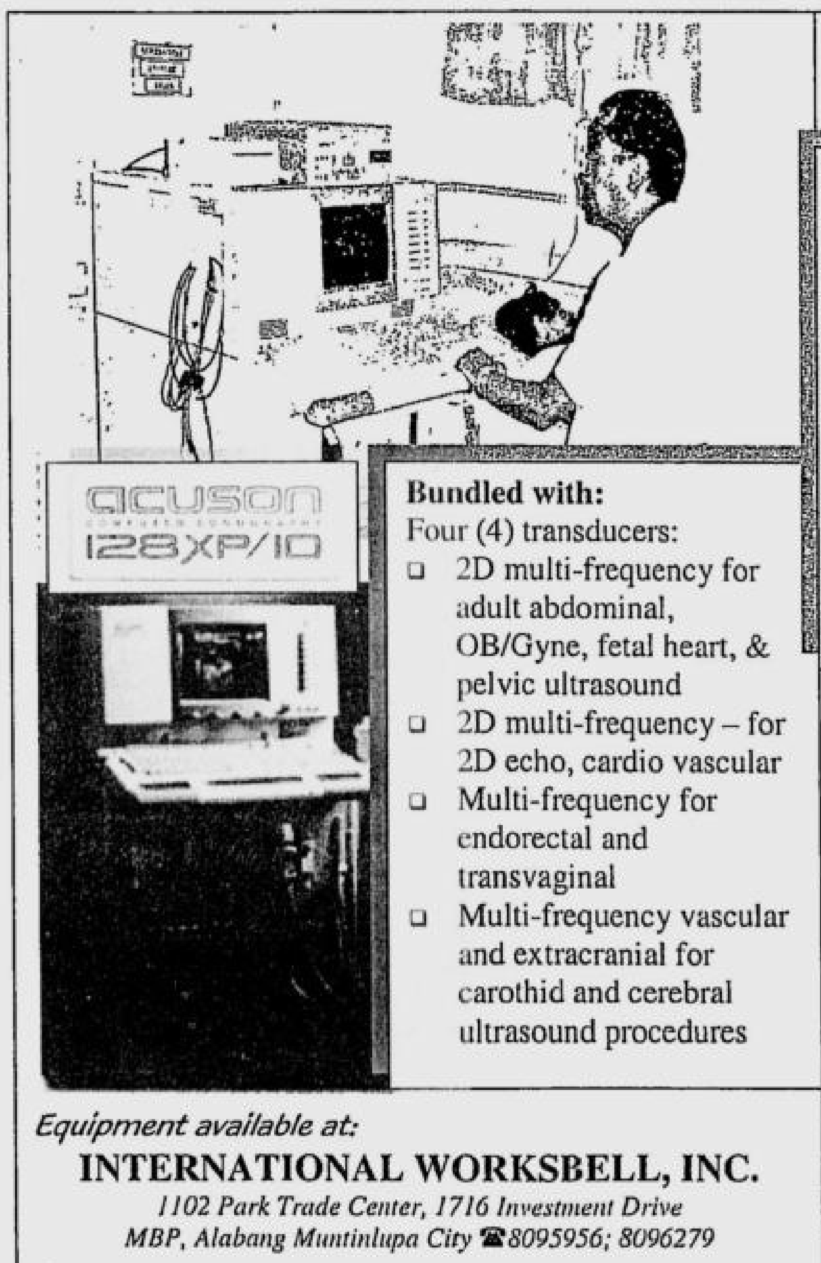

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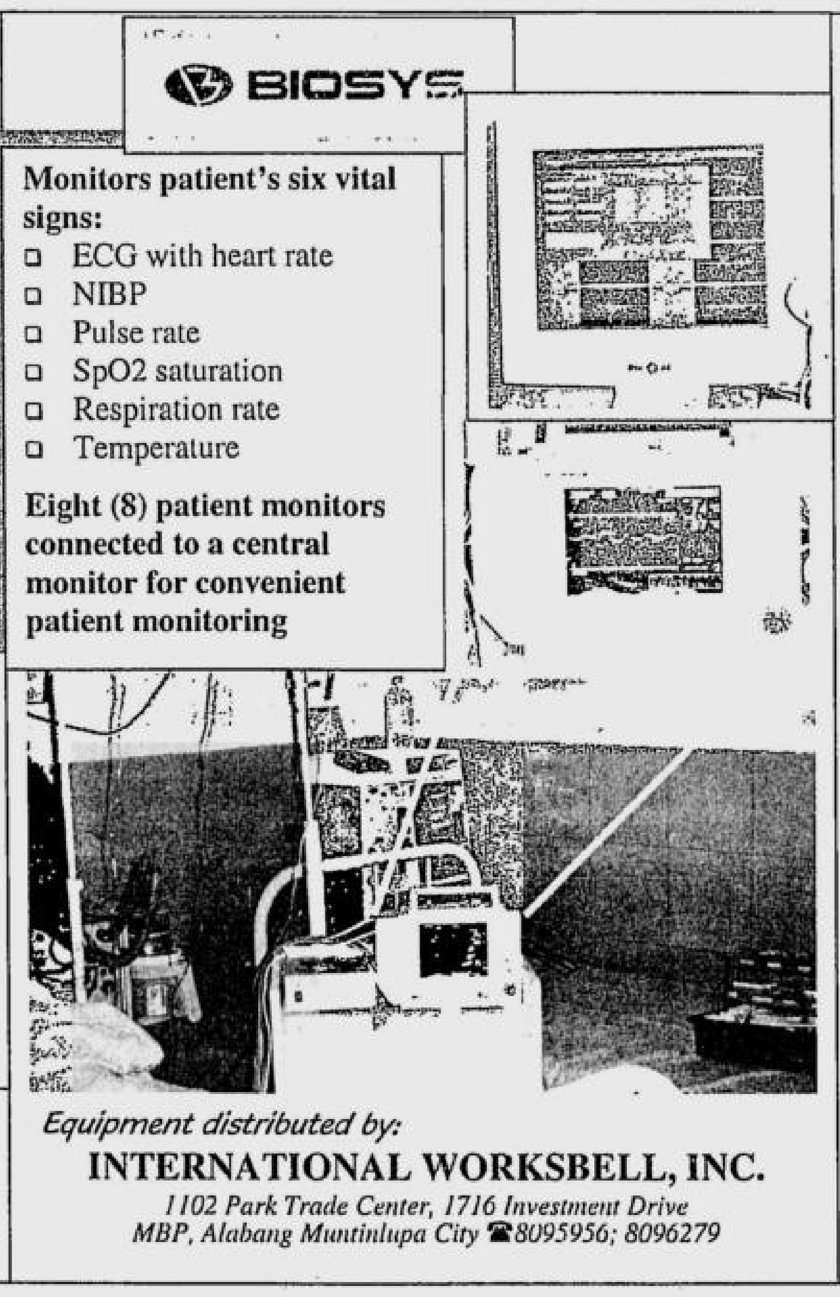

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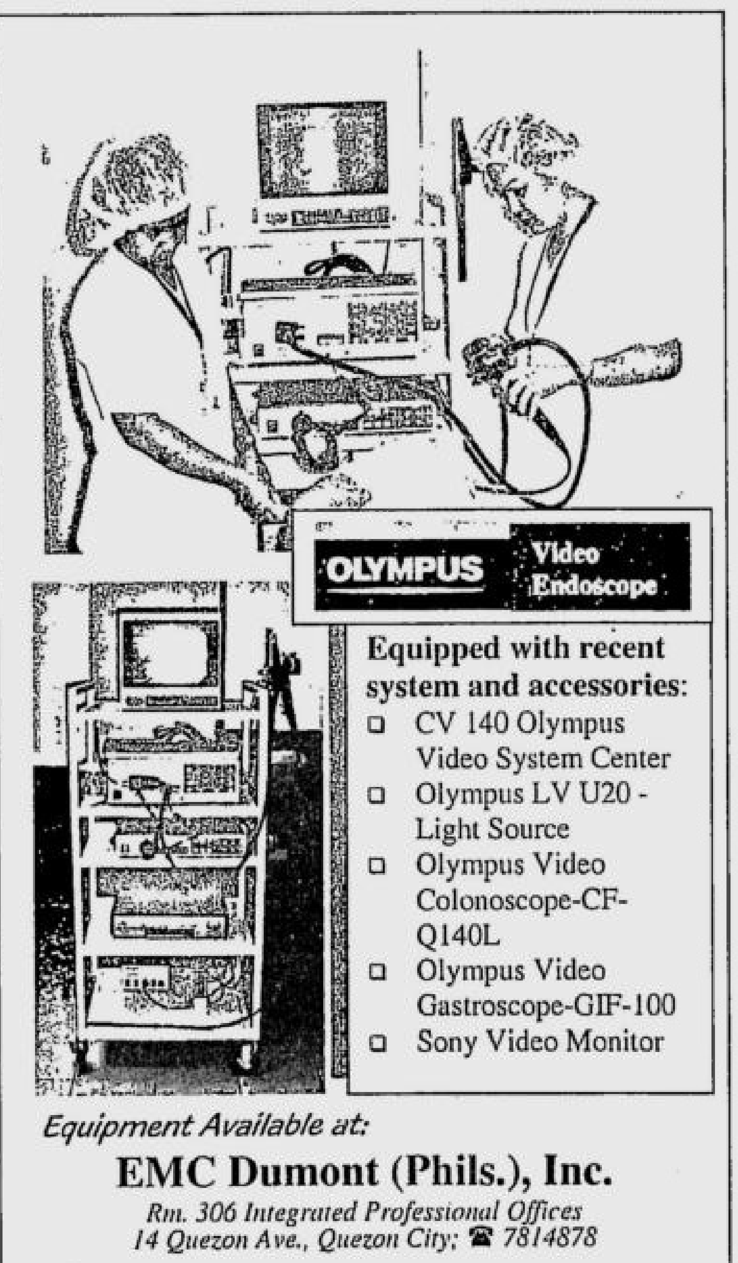

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3,000 workers lose jobs in W. Visayas

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—More than 3,000 workers in Western Visayas lost their jobs during the first half of this year according to government statistics.

Data from the regional office of the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) showed that 3,239 workers were laid off as of June this year.

The number of laid off workers is 49 percent higher than the 2,172 workers who lost their jobs for the same period last year and slightly higher than the 3,008 workers who were laid off during the first half of 2000.

The data showed that 762 of the laid off workers came from 30 firms that shut down while 2,477 were laid off by 69 firms that reduced their work force.

The bulk of the workers who lost their jobs were from Negros Occidental with 3,031 followed by Iloilo with 177 and Capiz with 22.

Eighty-one firms cited economic reasons for reducing their work force while 18 cited non-economic reasons.

The firms that laid off workers were spread out from the different industries. Community, social and personal services accounted for 18, followed by wholesale and retail trade (17), manufacturing (16), finance, insurance, real estate and business services (15), and 11 each from agricultural, fishery and forestry and construction sectors.

The bulk of the laid off workers came from the manufacturing sector with 1,903, followed by construction (624), community, social and personal services (227) and transportation, storage and communication (199).

Ramon Cua Locsin, executive vice president of the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Iloilo, said the retrenchment of workers reflects the "continuing general slowdown" of the economy of the region.

"There is not much money circulating in the economy. Even enrollment in schools is down," said Locsin, adding that many entrepreneurs expect an improvement in the economy next year at the earliest.

Aurelio Bosque, spokesperson of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno in Panay, blamed the government's import-dependent and export-oriented policy for the loss of jobs. "The jobs of workers are being sacrificed because local firms could not compete with the giant multinational firms," said Bosque.

Government planners blamed the economic decline on the volatile peace and order situation in the country that prompted several countries to issue advisories to their citizens to refrain from visiting several areas in the country.

A report of the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) showed that the economy of the region is reeling from low investor confidence as investments declined during the first quarter of this year.

Zamboanga now RP's 'sabong' capital

ZAMBOANGA CITY—If the Guinness Book of World Record had a category for the most cockpits, then this city could easily emerge as winner.

The city has 11 licensed cockpits, which are found in Barangays Vitali, Curuan, Sangali, Mercedes, Talon-Talon, Putik, Pasonanca, San Roque, Sinunuc, Ayala and Labuan.

As no other city or town had the same number of cockpits that Zamboanga has, the city could be the country's undisputed *sabong* capital.

But a retired police official said having 11 licensed cockpits was no cause of honor for Zamboanga.

In fact, retired Col. Rex Miravite, the former city police director, said city officials might have unwittingly violated a Marcos decree, which limits the number of licensed cockpits in cities.

Under Presidential Decree 449 or the Cockfighting Law of 1974, cities with a population of 100,000 or more were limited to having two cockpits only.

Cities or towns with a population of less than 100,000 were only entitled to one arena.

Miravite said PD 449, which has not been amended or repealed, was first implemented in Davao City.

In 1974, Davao had the reputation of having the most cockpits with 27 at that time.

Iloilo City has only a cockpit, the cities of Cagayan de Oro, General Santos and Davao with two cockpits each, Dipolog, Cotabato and Pagadian cities have also a cockpit each.
Ed General, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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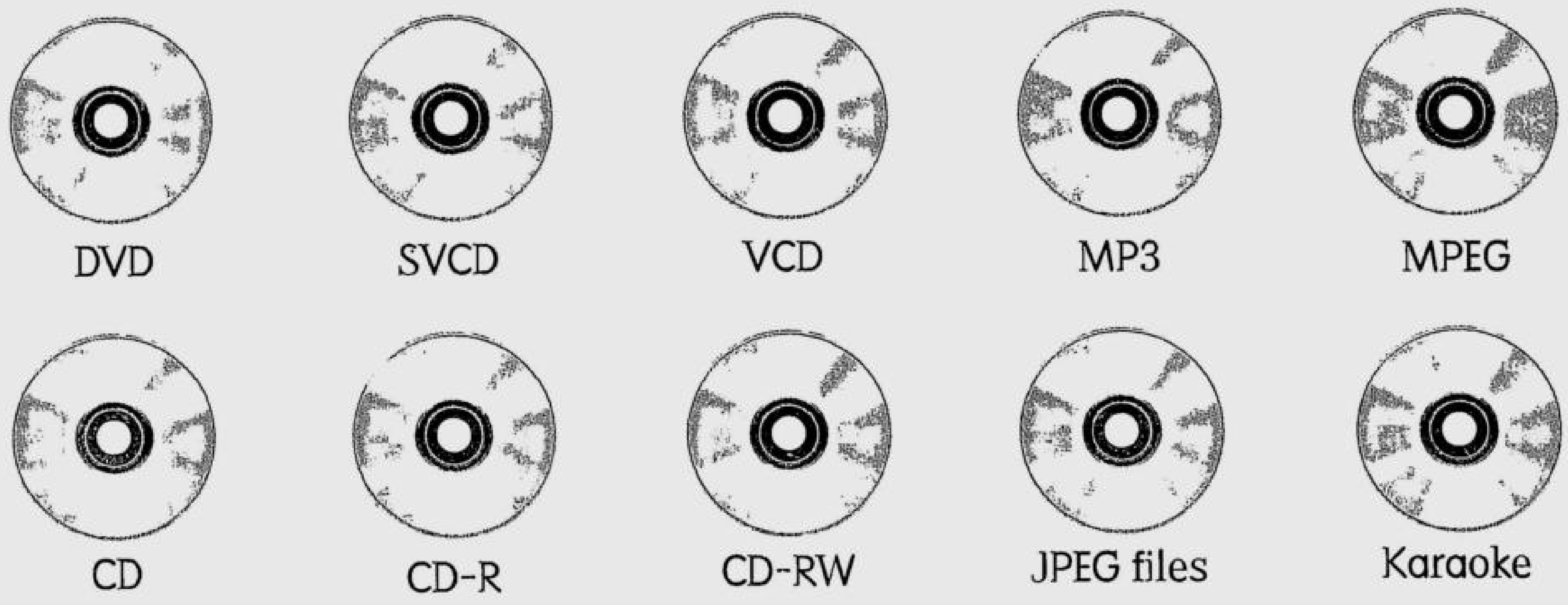

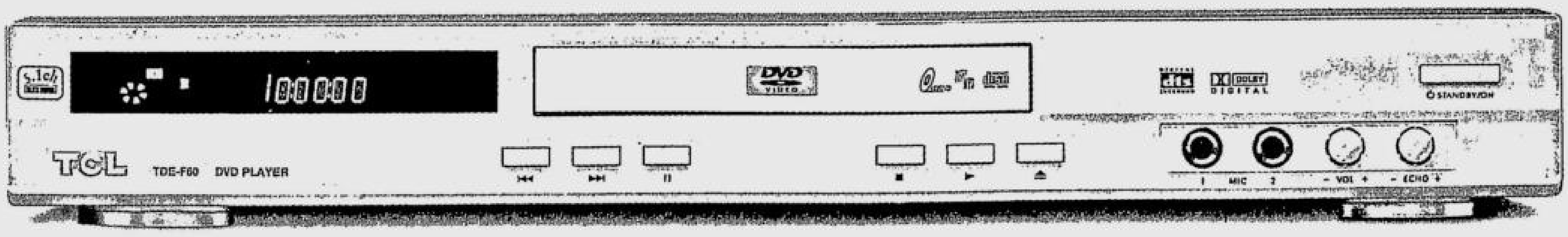

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Palestinian suicide bomber kills 9 in bus

From page A1

killed its military commander Salah Shehada, his deputy and 13 other Palestinians.

The bombing flew in the face of stepped up Israeli military action in the West Bank, including the demolition of nine homes of relatives of Palestinian suicide bombers and other gunmen, action which Israel said was aimed at deterring future attacks. ***(See related story in The World, Page A12.)***

DOCTORS bring the bodies out of the ill-fated bus. AFP

Outside the Damascus Gate to East Jerusalem's Old City, police exchanged fire with a 19-year-old Palestinian who shot dead an Israeli in a telephone truck. The gunman and a Palestinian passerby were killed, police said.

"We saw somebody standing by a truck. He leaned into the window. He had a pistol," said Carl Williams, 33, on a holiday from Boston. "When I saw that, I got out of here and hit the ground and immediately we heard gunshots."

Rescue workers said that at least 14 people were wounded.

The violence could cloud sketchy plans for talks that Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer planned this week with Palestinian Interior Minister Abdel Razzek al-Yahya, in charge of Palestinian security services.

Explosion

The bus, traveling between the Mediterranean port of Haifa and the northern city of Safed, exploded at a bus stop near Mt. Meron, the revered burial site of a second-century Jewish sage.

"We can say for certain that it was a suicide bomber," Galilee police chief Yehuda Solomon told Israel's Channel One television.

Police said that at least nine people were killed. Officials in local hospitals said they treated more than 25 wounded.

The Hamas statement said a "martyr" blew up the bus, but added that the group would not release the bomber's name to ensure Israel could not punish his relatives.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has called for international intervention to stop the house demolitions, describing the tactic as a crime against humanity.

Sunday's bus attack came four days after a Hamas bomb at an international student center in Jerusalem's Hebrew University killed seven people, including five Americans.

"This is the second revenge for Israeli crimes, when they killed Salah Shehada," Hamas said in its statement.

Gunman

In the Gaza Strip, the Israeli Army said it killed an armed Palestinian as he tried to infiltrate a Jewish settlement from the sea. A military spokesperson said the gunman wore a wetsuit and carried an assault rifle as well as grenades.

On Saturday, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said he still hoped to meet Palestinian leaders next week despite Wednesday's bomb attack at the university.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was to meet Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Egypt on Tuesday.

A military appeals committee was to reconvene on Sunday to decide whether to proceed with the deportation of two Palestinians, brothers of wanted militants, from the West Bank to the fenced-in Gaza Strip.

Israel's attorney general has given the Army the green light to exile to Gaza relatives of militants, on condition it could prove the family members had a link to the attacks.

Israeli soldiers have been conducting a large-scale assault since Friday in the Casbah, or Old City, of Nablus, making house-to-house searches of explosives and suspected suicide bombers and their handlers.

The Nablus operation is the largest movement of troops since Israel reoccupied seven West Bank cities in response to suicide bombings in Jerusalem in mid-June.

At least 1,479 Palestinians and 583 Israelis have been killed since a Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation began in September 2000 after peace talks froze. *Reuters*

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BE IT KNOWN THAT...

THE UNITED GROUP OF COMPANIES-TIBAYAN GROUP (UGC-TG) or TIBAYAN GROUP is a conglomerate of duly registered subsidiaries in accordance with the existing laws of the country where they operate.

In strict compliance with legal and high ethical standards, Tibayan Group has been circumspect, not only in compliance with the laws and ordinances of the land, but also in the conduct and manner of its business dealings and transaction.

Tibayan Group therefore views with grave concern the serious implication of some isolated spurious business activities, questionable solicitation for alleged investments, and other unethical trade practices being committed and perpetrated in obvious misrepresentation of the Tibayan Group or any of its subsidiaries.

Moreover, one particular group of companies with a logo-seal that smacks of resemblance with that of the Tibayan Group has been allegedly engaging in solicitation of investment without permit and approval to do so from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). When queried, representatives from the said companies would claim past or present alliance, affiliation, partnership, or even membership, with the Tibayan Group or any of its subsidiaries.

SO THE PUBLIC MAY KNOW...

And so to put an end, once and for all, to some clouds of doubt and unholy speculation, Tibayan Group denounces, in strongest terms possible, the perpetration of above misrepresentation and spurious solicitation of speculative investments, and do hereby make it known:

1. That the Tibayan Group consists of only the subsidiaries and affiliates as found in our official website, http://www.ungih com
2. That the **Tibayan Group Investment Company, Inc.** is the only subsidiary of the Tibayan Group of Companies engaged in selling mutual funds investment to the public, with **TG Asset Management Corporation** as its Fund Manager and Advisor, as registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission under Registration NO. A200109934 with SEC-CFD Order Nos. 099 and 100 series of 2001 and Reg. No.A20011593 with current license issued 30 April 2002, respectively.
3. That no other Company or affiliate under the Tibayan Group is hereby authorized to solicit investment except as above cited.

IN WITNESS HERETO, we have caused the seal of the Tibayan Group of Companies to be so reproduced, and the signatures of its authorized officials so affixed.

TIBAYAN GROUP

JESUS V. TIBAYAN
CHAIRMAN
Tibayan Group

JIMMY C. CATIGAN
DIRECTOR
For Security and Legal

Republic of the Philippines
MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Metro Manila

INVITATION FOR CONSULTING SERVICES

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) invites eligible Filipino consulting firms duly registered with the Department of Trade and Industry or the Securities and Exchange Commission for the purpose of drawing a long list from which a selection shall be made for the provision of consulting services for the NAIA Master Development Plan.

The selected Consultant who shall be screened and evaluated by the MIAA Prequalification, Evaluation and Award Committee (MIAA-PEAC) in accordance with procedures of the NEDA Guidelines on the Procurement of Consulting Services for Government Projects (Implementing Rules and Regulations of Executive Order No. 164), shall be responsible in the preparation of a comprehensive development plan for whole NAIA estate, including the airports' future operational requirements and covering three (3) areas of concern, i.e., airport macro economic study and facilities, NAIA estate development study and organizational development. It is a must that the Consultant has extensive experience in airport planning and macro economic study, land use development planning, transport system planning and engineering, business development and public administration/management that can be verified.

Consultants who wish to offer their services are requested to submit an official transmittal letter/statement together with their duly accomplished and notarized prequalification statements, as provided under Appendix A of the NEDA Guidelines, not later than **August 16, 2002** at the Pavements and Grounds Division, MIAA Engineering Building, MIA Road, Pasay City during official business hours only. Consultant's Prequalification Forms may also be secured from the Pavements and Grounds Division Office from **August 5-14, 2002** upon presentation of this advertisement and official letter of intent. Interested foreign consultants with extensive experience in the type of service and duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission may associate themselves with legitimate Filipino Consultants and must have proper authorization to practice their profession locally with appropriate Philippine professional regulatory agencies.

(Sgd.) ELPIDIO L. MENDOZA
Chairman
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(PDI -- Aug. 5 & 12, 2002)

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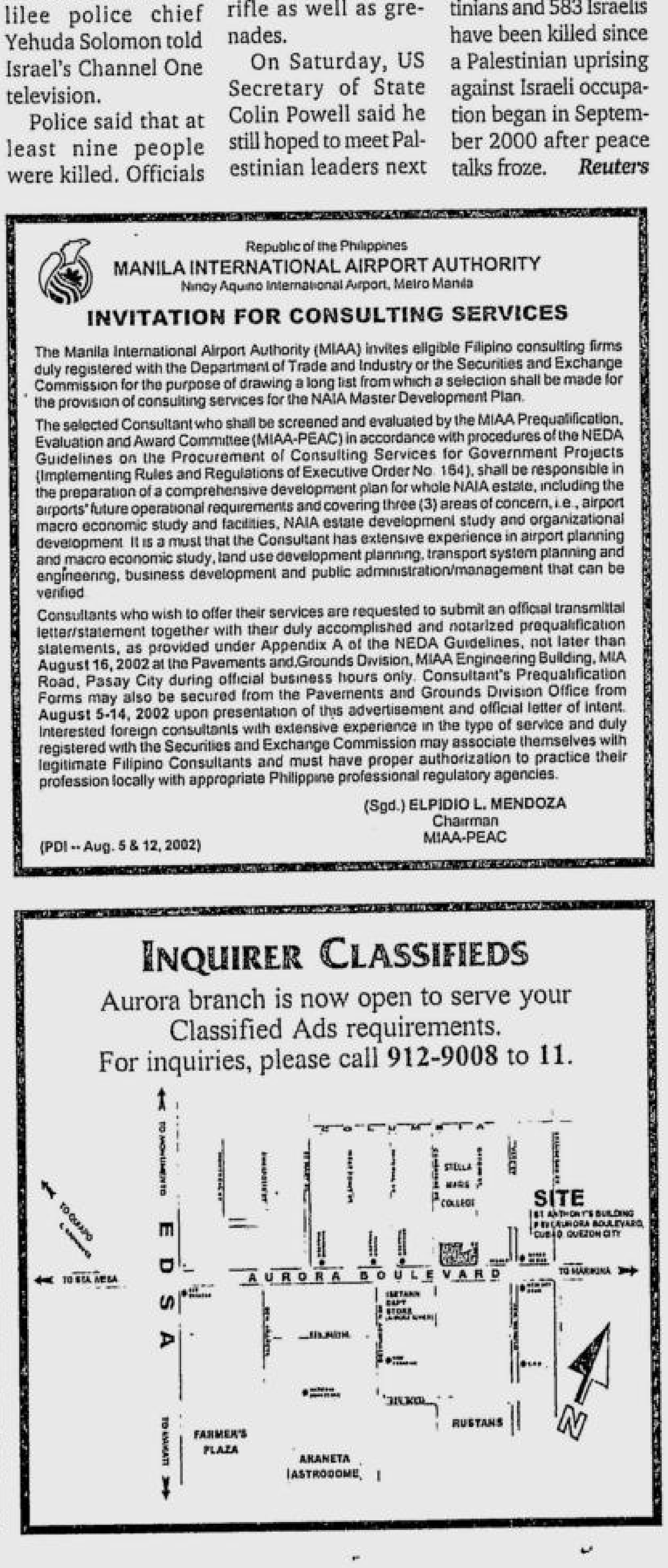


12 robbers, 7 Abus fall

From page A1

the passengers of a bus which was about to park in the restaurant.

Joint operations

The joint operations were carried out by members of the Cordillera Pacer, Benguet police office, Binalonan police station, Urdaneta police station, Pugo police station and Tuba police station, under Ilocos police director Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao and CAR police director Chief Supt. George Aliño.

The suspects were identified as John Malidum Jr., Alex Ubido, Jonathan Fokan, Romeo Binuloc, Heraldy Bag-ay, Nelson Bag-ay, Peter Bokalen and Gilbert Balonsay, said to be members of the gang's "Sagada group." Also arrested were "Kalinga group" members Edmundo Boswal, Aslo Ambonoc, David Pulacan and Junel Balotoc.

The suspected leader of the Kalinga group, Martin Daligdig, eluded arrest.

A day after the Tuba heist on July 31, the police, acting on a tip, arrested Malidum, Ubido and Fokan in Binalonan, Pangasinan, confiscating a 9mm pistol.

The next day, a follow-up operation was conducted in Urdaneta, Pangasinan, which led to the arrest of the Bag-ays and the confiscation of two revolvers.

Another raid that day led to the arrest of Bokalen, Balonsay and Binuloc in Pugo, La Union and the confiscation of one .45 cal. pistol, a .38 cal. pistol, two fragmentation grenades and one motorcycle.

On Aug. 3, Boswal, Ambonoc and Pulacan were arrested at Navy Base, Pacdal Circle, Baguio City. A .22 cal. Magnum, two revolvers and ammunition were confiscated.

Police believe that the gang was also responsible for the June 23 robbery of the Jhonz restaurant in Tuba, five bank robberies in Pangasinan and La Union, several bus hold-ups and other restaurants on the highways of Benguet, Pangasinan and La Union.

The 12 suspects have standing warrants of arrest for various offenses.

The seven suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits were identified as Ganih Alih, Sabtula Apha, Dagindoh Murtan, Zarolan Sahadani, Asin Alih, Julie Ajijul and Juhanu Sahamon.

According to reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo, the group was on board a private Tamaraw vehicle around 12:30 p.m. on Friday when they were stopped at a checkpoint manned by Army personnel at the boundary of Barangays Buansa and Kalatian in Indanan.

The group was turned over to Task Group Orion for tactical interrogation.

The military has been rounding up members of the Abu Sayyaf, whose ranks have fallen after a six-month counter-terrorism operation.

The joint RP-US military exercise, Balikatan 02-1, ended last week, but several US Special Forces remain on Basilan island to guard facilities and infrastructure built by US naval engineers, the famous Seabees.

The counter-terrorism operations will resume in October and would likely shift to Jolo.

The Abu Sayyaf last year kidnapped three Americans and 17 Filipinos from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan and later moved them to the jungles of Basilan. Most of the Filipinos were freed in exchange for ransom or were killed. One hostage from California, Guillermo Sobero, was beheaded.

The last US hostage, Kansas missionary Gracia Burnham, was recovered in a bloody rescue last month in which her husband, Martin Burnham and Filipina nurse Edibora Yap were killed. ***With reports from PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, AFP***

MILITARY and police officials also scored in Mindanao with the capture of Ismael Marohombsar, elder brother of the escaped leader of the Pentagon gang. GRACE ALBASIN

US aid belittled as 'consuelo de bobo'

From page A1

Ocampo said the United States was not ready to make commitments to the Philippines when President Macapagal-Arroyo asked for concessions from Powell in exchange for the country's avid support for the US global war on terrorism.

"Naningil si President Macapagal pero hindi handa (ang US) na magrespond," Ocampo said.

Except for the $55 million in anti-terrorism package, Powell made no firm commitments on a number of "requests" made by Ms Macapagal when they met in Malacañang on Saturday.

These include the grant of zero tariff on Philippine tuna, benefits for Filipino war veterans, welfare of Filipinos in the United States, cleanup of former American military bases, and removal of the country from the money laundering "black list."

Powell also gave no strong commitments on requests for the lifting of the negative US travel advisory and for a visit soon by US President George W. Bush.

Despite the few commitments made by Powell, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said Powell's visit was a "resounding" success for both governments.

"The visit is a signal of much stringer RP-US relations, which will help our country's security," Golez said.

Golez said that Powell himself considered the Philippines a shoo-in for the $1.6-billion Millennium Challenge Development Fund.

"Powell said we are qualified because of our commitment to democracy and good governance. This will help in alleviating poverty," Golez said.

Ocampo said he did not agree with the way Ms Macapagal assured Powell that her administration would uphold the sanctity of its contracts with five US independent power producers (IPPs) in the review of their "onerous" provisions.

Subservience

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said the President's line on the IPPs "smacks of subservience" to the United States.

Rosales noted that the review of IPP contracts was provided for in the Electric Power Industry Reform Act and thus, "fall within our jurisdiction."

She also said that she found "parochial on the part of the Philippines to discuss tuna, IPPs and other little things" with Powell when there were other "national political issues" that needed to be discussed.

The Coalition of People Opposed to Warrantless Electricity Rates (Power) said the President betrayed consumers just to please a visiting US official.

"With Ms Macapagal assuring Mr. Powell that IPP contracts, perhaps including those involving US firms like the bankrupt Enron, will be respected, what happens now to the so-called inter-agency review?" Power spokesperson Lolita Donato said.

Donato said that the IPP contracts, mostly fraudulent and onerous according to independent studies, should be rescinded.

"Only Mr. Powell and big US firms involved in the power industry were happy with the results of his visit to Manila and talks with Philippine officials. They got what they wanted without asking for it," Donato said.

"Hindi umubra ang taray ni Gloria kay Powell (Her being snooty did not work with Powell). *Palibhasa*, she was acting like a pauper," said Teodoro Casiño, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan.

Puppies

Casiño said Ms Macapagal and her Cabinet members looked like puppies beside Powell.

"It was truly sickening to see officials like Ms Macapagal and members of her Cabinet, specifically 'Amboys' Blas Ople, Golez and Angelo Reyes fawning like puppies over Powell's promises of military and economic aid," the Bayan leader said.

Casiño said it seemed that all that Powell did here was dangle $155 million in military aid.

"He did not even give any importance to Ms Macapagal's wish list, even insulting her by saying `I did not know that someday I would be dealing with tuna,'" Casiño said.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) expressed suspicions that the Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement (MLSA) was tackled during Powell's visit.

"It is very ridiculous that the lead commander of US wars of aggression and a zealous US puppet would sit only to discuss tuna," KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said in a statement.

Ramos said that "tuna talks" could be done by the US agriculture attaché and Philippine Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor.

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the government was preparing a "wish list" so that it could access the $55-million anti-terrorism package pledged by Powell.

"The President has instructed (Defense) Secretary (Angelo) Reyes and other concerned parties to get ready with a wish list to be submitted to the US government," Bunye said in a radio interview.

Bunye said the anti-terrorism package "is a comprehensive package with military and economic components."

He noted that the Philippines was supposed to get only $20 million in anti-terrorism assistance but the US Congress increased it to $55 million.

"So we got a $35-million bonus. It will really be used for anti-terrorism," he said. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo and Norman Bordadora***

GMA bent on shedding . . .

From page A1

Opposition senators say the President's presence in presentations of criminal suspects is a mere publicity stunt. But yesterday, an opposition congressman came to her defense.

"Better to have a president who is active against crime than one who is ambivalent about it," Rep. Abraham Mitra said in a press statement.

Mitra said the President's presence during the presentation of captured criminals or during major drug busts shows that "she's breathing down the neck of the Philippine National Police."

"That sight comforts the public, who are reassured that their leader is really committed in bringing down crime," he said.

Striking back

Public anger over kidnappings and terrorism has risen following a series of brutal abductions and murders by the Abu Sayyaf.

"It's a feeling of wanting to strike back. People are sick of hiding," said Fernando Pesa, director of ZEV Inc., a firm that provides training in security and counter-terrorism techniques.

He said the President's new thrust "is long overdue," adding that many corporations and individuals were seeking training from his firm on how to fight off kidnappers and robbers.

Surveys of businessmen have found that the peace and order issue ranks as their biggest concern. Law-enforcement agencies are given low marks.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the influential Makati Business Club, said: "In the last year and a half, the crime situation has not improved and you can argue it is a little worse."

Luz said businessmen were "delighted" about Ms Macapagal's new campaign although it was too early to gauge its effects.

Ms Macapagal originally focused on spurring economic growth but "there was a realization (that), no matter how much you fix the economy, if you don't fix other areas of the environment, like law and order . . . you won't have a good economy," says Luz.

Felipe Miranda, a political science professor at the University of the Philippines, said fighting crime was a quick way for the administration to impress the public.

"This is an area where you can score quickly relative to trying to score on economic matters," where the benefits of reforms will not immediately be felt, Miranda said.

"If you are a president who must try to get across the public that you are able to do something, then peace and order sounds like something good to focus on," he said.

Critics, however, said that the President was transforming Malacañang into a police precinct by having criminals presented to her at the Palace, where she also receives local and foreign dignitaries.

Over the last several days, Ms Macapagal has been practically everywhere to trumpet the government's accomplishments in the anti-crime drive.

On Saturday, the President presented a police superintendent, two policemen and two civilians who were arrested for highway robbery, theft and extortion.

On July 19, she went to a house in Varsity Hills, in Loyola Heights, Quezon City, after the police raided a shabu laboratory.

The next day, the President motored to Marilao, Bulacan, where members of a kidnap-for-ransom gang were killed in a supposed shoot-out with the police. The corpse of one suspect was still in the scene when she posed before photographers.

On July 24, Ms Macapagal went to Camp Crame where she was presented suspects involved in drug trafficking after they were arrested in Quezon province.

On July 26, she led in the burning of marijuana plants in General Santos City.

On July 31, she went to the National Bureau of Investigation for the presentation of a bank official allegedly involved in the diversion of taxes and a Nigerian arrested for cocaine trafficking.

The President went back to the NBI the next day for the presentation of another bank official allegedly involved in the same scam and a separate batch of suspects allegedly involved in printing fake US currency. ***With a report from AFP***

Margie slams PAL

From page A1

deplored what she described as the "shabby and sloppy treatment" she and fellow passengers suffered at the hands of the country's flag carrier on Friday. Flight PR 815, which was supposed to depart Manila for Davao at 4:30 p.m., was delayed for over four hours, causing her to almost miss an 8 p.m. show she was producing.

"I had the costumes with me, I was growing desperate," she said.

Floirendo had just planed in from Hawaii at 3 p.m. and met up with husband Davao del Norte Rep. Antonio Floirendo and their two daughters.

According to her, PAL officials informed them only at 4:15 p.m. that the 4:30 flight was delayed.

"They did not even offer to transfer us to another airline even if this was a competitor. PAL had an obligation to fly us out by 4:30 p.m., be it on a PAL flight or an Air Philippines or Cebu Pacific flight," she said.

Floirendo said Air Philippines and Cebu Pacific had flights leaving at around the same time.

At around 5:30 p.m., Floirendo said they were again told that the flight would be delayed and that this time the flight would leave at 8:30 p.m.

Rebecca Bermudez, of the PAL office in the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, said yesterday the reason for the delay was a change in aircraft. The original plane, she said, had maintenance problems that could have compromised the safety of the passengers. Preparing the next available plane took much of the time, she added.

Others on the same delayed flight were television host Vic Sotto and National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco, Floirendo said.

"It's very bad for our tourism. An Australian passenger was dismayed saying that so much time and money was being wasted," Floirendo said.

The Floirendos were left with no choice but to charter a private plane from Subic Air.

"Imagine the cost to us?" Floirendo complained. ***With a report from Norman Bordadora***

Palace: Bar council, not the firm, has say

From page A1

and Ms Macapagal.

The firm's founders, Carpio, Pancho Villaraza and Cruz, were former junior lawyers in the law firm of Manuel Zamora and Luis Villafuerte, which was based in the then Solid Mills Building in Makati.

Zamora later branched out into banking and finance and Villafuerte started his political career, prompting Carpio, Villaraza, Cruz and two others to take over the firm.

The firm was renamed Carpio, Villaraza, Cruz, Barza and Rosel law office, but the latter two soon dropped out.

LTA building

In the early 1980s, the firm moved its offices into the LTA Building on 118 Perea St., Legaspi Village in Makati, where it is housed until today. LTA stands for the name of Lourdes Tuazon Arroyo, mother of Ms Macapagal's husband.

"The move to LTA Building signaled the start of a professional relationship with the mother of Mike," a source said. "This relationship continued after Mrs. Arroyo passed away and Mike assumed the mantle as head of the family."

The wife of Villaraza, Sally, became close to the Macapagal family and word has it that when former first lady Evangeline Macaraeg-Macapagal became sick, Sally was very much involved in taking care of her.

"Mrs. Villaraza is a very kind person," a Palace insider said. "She is a close friend of the Macapagals."

It was thus not surprising that Sally was one of the six principal sponsors when Mikee Arroyo, the eldest son of the President, got married in June.

During the administration of President Fidel Ramos, the firm became known as "the law office." The law firm's working relationship with the Ramos camp began before the 1992 elections.

Carpio was introduced to then presidential aspirant Ramos by a common friend and soon the firm assigned five lawyers to help the Ramos campaign. Sources said they included Carpio, Marcelo and Cruz.

Ramos won the presidential election and Carpio later became his chief legal counsel.

"The public perception was that the law office was close to Ramos. That was true. But through the years, the firm's association with the Arroyos and Macapagals continued and strengthened," a source said.

This closeness was evident during the administration of Joseph Estrada, particularly when he was accused of taking jueteng payoffs.

Carpio was one of the signatories in the impeachment complaint filed against Estrada with the House of Representatives.

Appearing as counsel, Marcelo expertly guided Estrada accuser Ilocos Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in his testimony during the aborted impeachment trial.

Delicate appointment

Sen. Joker Arroyo said Ms Macapagal's choice of the next Ombudsman would be the "most crucial and delicate appointment" she would be making through her entire term.

Arroyo said the President's choice would be the ultimate test of her sincerity and will to fight graft and corruption.

No less than the Constitution has mandated "dual standards (for the Ombudsman)—recognized probity and independence," the senator said.

"It is the sum total of moral excellence more than the intellect that defines the Ombudsman," he said.

Arroyo noted that the President had said that integrity and competence were the two qualifications needed for the Ombudsman.

"The President focuses on ability while our Constitution emphasizes independence," he said.

He said that "one could be the most brilliant barrister in town but he or she cannot be a good Ombudsman if he is not truly independent—that he or she cannot be influenced by anyone."

As in European countries from which the Philippines got the idea of the anti-graft prosecution arm, the Ombudsman should be "remote and aloof, virtually a recluse and possessed of virtues of self-abnegation that would ensure his independence." ***With a report from Rocky Nazareno***

SUERTRES 4 6 3
(in exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
9 38 26 36 12 23

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Hermie's horse tops Alphonse Stakes

FAVORITE Baby Lite uncorked a fiery run down the stretch to rule the Sir Alphonse Stakes race yesterday at the Santa Ana Park. The three-year-old chestnut filly owned by sportsman-businessman Hermie Esguerra beat second pick Grannykan by five lengths to win the P300,000 first prize. Baby Lite's victory was engineered by star jockey Jonathan Hernandez.

UAAP ACTION

UST, Ateneo prevail

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	5	0
Ateneo	4	2
UST	4	2
UE	4	2
Adamson	2	3
UP	2	3
FEU	1	5
NU	0	5

By Dennis U. Eroa

ATENEO banked on a furious fourth quarter breakaway to down Adamson, 79-73, while University of Santo Tomas averted a last-minute collapse to frustrate National University, 85-84, in a pair of UAAP basketball tournament thrillers yesterday at the Makati Coliseum.

Slowed down by Adamson's effective switching defense, Ateneo poured the heat in the final 10 minutes of play, ending a two-game losing spell and resuming its hot pursuit of unbeaten defending champion La Salle, which is occupying solo leadership with an unblemished 5-0 card.

Ateneo, University of the East and UST are now tied in second place with identical 4-2 slates.

"We lacked energy and Adamson happens to be one of the league's cohesive teams," said Ateneo mentor Joel Banal. The Blue Eagles faced a must-win situation against the Falcons in order to keep the Green Archers, whom they will meet on Aug. 10 at the Araneta Coliseum, within their sight.

Ateneo had earlier bowed to University of the Philippines and UE, respectively.

Adamson was fresh from upsetting Far Eastern University but was overwhelmed by Ateneo's intensity in the endgame.

Bullstrong Enrico Villanueva exploded with 25 points and nine rebounds, but it was the explosive plays of Wesley Gonzales and Jec Chia in the second half which proved crucial for the Blue Eagles.

The six-foot-3 Gonzales almost singlehandedly powered Ateneo to a 56-56 tie at the end of the third period. He fouled out with 7:31 remaining in the fourth after scoring 11 points.

The UST-NU clash wasn't lacking in fireworks, too. Reliever Glenn Manching and Jemal Viscarra made the crucial baskets for the Tigers while Cyrus Baguio and Alwyn Espiritu led the scoring chores by finishing with 24 and 13 points, respectively.

Despite the win, coach Aric del Rosario lambasted the spotty officiating. As the final buzzer sounded, Del Rosario and the irate UST coaching staff angrily approached the technical committee for a crucial non-call on a driving Jeff Napa.

Napa exploded with 32 points, but failed to shake the tough-defending Tigers in the game's final play. He was clearly guilty of travelling but the referees saw it otherwise, earning Del Rosario's ire.

Scores:

First game

ATENEO 79—Villanueva 25, Fonacier 11, Gonzales 11, Tenorio 10, Chia 10, Alvarez 5, Deo Rosario 3, Elmido 2, Cruz 2, Tadeo 0.

ADAMSON 73—Abadia 17, Mamaclay 17, Alonzo 11, Tagupa 7, Ferrer 7, Hate 4, Mangulabnan 4, Rolan 4, Catabay 2, Tiongco 0.

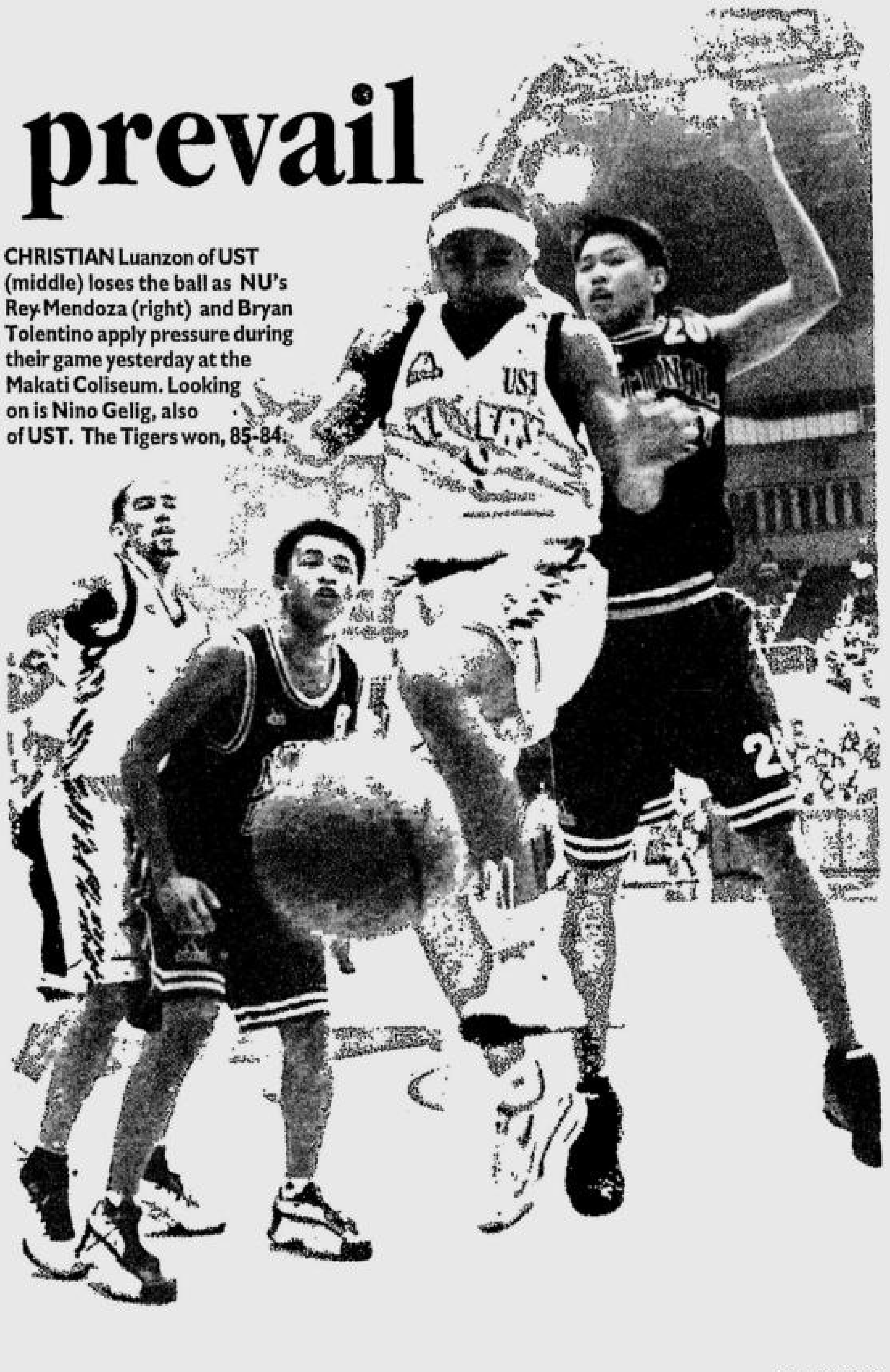
Quarters: 16-13, 33-38, 56-56, 79-73.

Second game

UST 85—Baguio 24, Espiritu 13, Manching 11, Vizcarra 9, Luanzon 9, Gelig 5, Del Rosario 4, Villamin 4, Manansala 3, Raterta 2, De Guzman 1.

NU 84—Napa 32, Grijaldo 19, Cajayon 9, Baguion 8, Urbano 7, Tolentino 4,Catamora 4, Mendoza 4, Malcontento 0.

Quarters: 20-21, 42-50, 63-70, 85-84.



CHRISTIAN Luanzon of UST (middle) loses the ball as NU's Rey Mendoza (right) and Bryan Tolentino apply pressure during their game yesterday at the Makati Coliseum. Looking on is Nino Gelig, also of UST. The Tigers won, 85-84.

JOAN BONDOC

NCAA today

(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)

8:30 a.m.—SBC vs Mapua (jrs/srs)
11:30 a.m.—JRU vs UPHR (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—SSC vs Letran (jrs/srs)

Alaska rips Selecta-RP

GAME TOMORROW (Philsports)
7 p.m.—FedEx vs Red Bull

By June Navarro

ALASKA walloped an out-of-sync Selecta-RP Team, 84-59, and moved closer to a twice-to-beat quarterfinals advantage last night in the PBA Samsung Commissioner's Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Aces needed only three quarters to finish off the Nationals as they picked up a third straight win, their sixth in nine games overall.

"I hate to say this but they (Nationals) would probably prefer to be knocked out of the tournament. They are regressing at this point and losing their focus," said Alaska coach Tim Cone, who encountered the same problems when he steered the Centennial team to the Asiad bronze in 1998.

Paolo Mendoza sizzled as Sta. Lucia Realty trimmed Shell Velocity, 73-66, in the second game. While the Realtors (6-3) formalized their entry in the quarterfinals, the Turbo Chargers (4-5) automatically barged into the next round after Selecta-RP's setback against Alaska.

Scores:

ALASKA 84—Williams 24, Carawell 18, Duat 15, Arigo 10, Santos 7, Ordonio 6, Allado 4, Feihl 0, Teng 0, Reyes 0.

SELECTA-RP 59—Taulava 12, Duremdes 11, Castillo 8, Hontiveros 7, Espino 6, Cariaso 6, Menk 4, Racela 3, Ildefonso 2, Seigle 0.

Quarters: 26-21, 45-38, 65-50, 84-59.

St. Benilde shines

DEFENDING champion College of St. Benilde dumped St. Scholastica's College, 94-30, to seize a 2-0 lead yesterday in the 33rd Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball tournament at the SSC gym.

The Blazers opened their title-retention bid in devastating fashion, routing last year's runner-up, Lyceum of the Philippines, 70-63, during the opener on Saturday.

Assumption College of San Lorenzo-Makati bounced back from a 60-55 setback against the St. Scho Doves after it won by forfeiture over Rizal Technological University in the other game.

June Navarro

Pinoys bow to Malaysians

By Roy Luarca

KUALA LUMPUR—Team Burlington-Philippines nearly spoiled Malaysia's victory party Saturday night in the 3rd Southeast Asia Basketball Association (Seaba) Junior Men's Championship at the MABA Gym here.

The Filipinos gave the Malaysians anxious moments before yielding, 57-55, at the close of the 18-year-and-under biennial meet.

They even had the chance to force overtime but Jerson Torculas' jumper rimmed out and Jayfelson Agbayani's follow-up got blocked as the final buzzer sounded.

Counting their 98-43 dumping of the Singaporeans, the Filipinos wound up fourth with a 1-3 record. Malaysia was expected to win handily as it had beaten Singapore by 82 points, Indonesia by 21 and Thailand by 12 to claim its first title in the tournament last held in Indonesia in 1998 with the Philippines claiming the championship.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: LPGA Giant Eagle Classic, First Round at 7 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

PGA - The International, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r – 10 p.m.) on Star Sports

TENNIS: Tennis Masters (Toronto), Men's Semifinal Match #1 at 9 a.m. (r), Match #2 at 11 a.m., Men's Final at 7 p.m. on Star Sports

BASEBALL: MLB - St. Louis Cardinals vs Atlanta Braves at 8 a.m. (r – 5:30 p.m.) on ESPN

ACURA CLASSIC

Williams, Dokic pull thru

CARLSBAD, California —Top-seeded Venus Williams beat No. 3 seed Lindsay Davenport 6-2, 6-1 in the semifinals of the Acura Classic on Saturday night at La Costa Resort and Spa.

In the day's other semifinal, Anna Kournikova's improbable run ended with a 6-7 (6), 7-6 (2), 6-0 loss to No. 6 seed Jelena Dokic.

Williams, the two-time defending champion, and Dokic will square off in the championship Sunday. Williams holds a 2-1 lead in head-to-head competition.

"Venus presents all sorts of problems," Dokic said. "The power and speed of her game is very hard to beat. She doesn't make many mistakes."

Williams only needed one hour to put away the overwhelmed Davenport. With the first set tied 2-2, Williams won eight straight to take command.

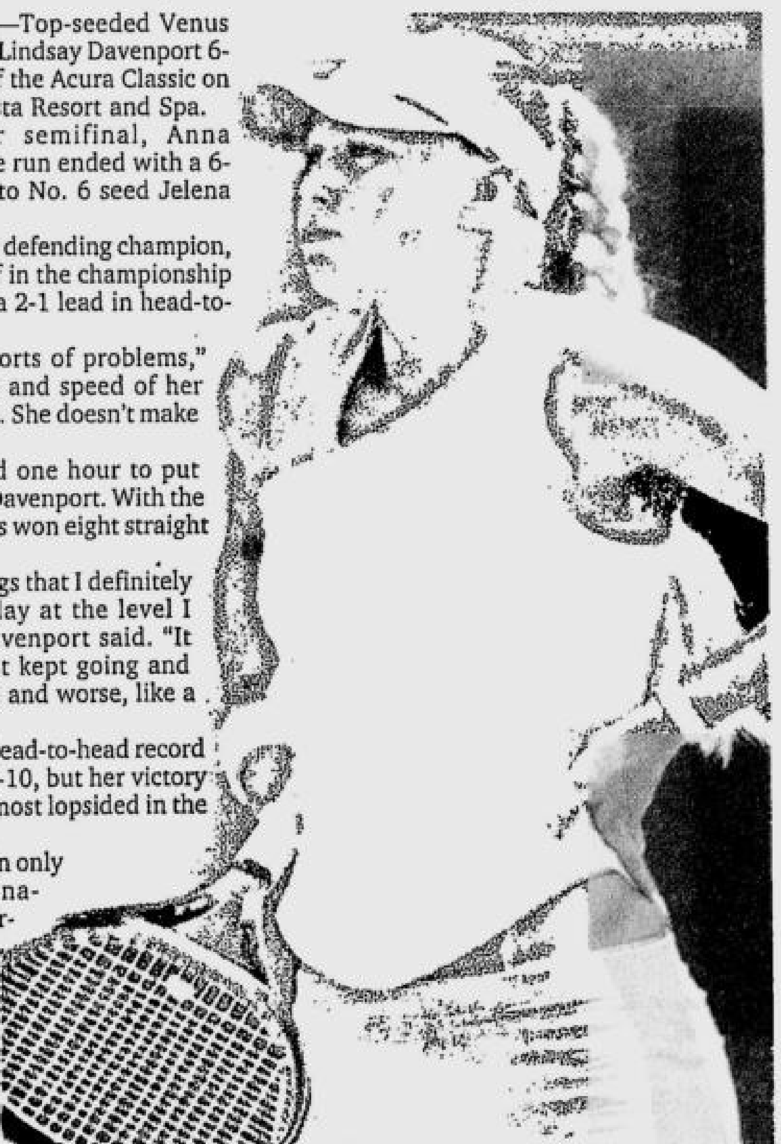
"It is one of those things that I definitely was not prepared to play at the level I needed to tonight," Davenport said. "It happened so fast. It just kept going and going and getting worse and worse, like a nightmare."

Williams evened her head-to-head record against Davenport to 10-10, but her victory Saturday night was the most lopsided in the series.

Davenport is playing in only her second WTA tournament since right knee surgery in January.

"Lindsay has had a great tournament getting to the semis," Williams said. "It is just not easy to come back."

It took Dokic two hours to eliminate Kournikova in a match that included two set tiebreakers. *AP*



KOURNIKOVA reacts after losing a point against Dokic, who went on to post a 6-7 (6), 7-6 (2), 6-0 victory in their semifinal match. AP

Luzon soccer slated

SIX teams, led by highly rated Philippine Air Force of the National Capital Region, will vie for honors in the national men's football championship all-Luzon regional finals set Aug. 6 to 10 at the Philsports field in Pasig City.

Other contenders in the tourney organized by the Philippine Football Federation are Masbate City, Baguio, Laguna, Camarines Norte and Rizal province.

This is the first time in PFF history that Luzon is holding a regional tournament to determine the top four teams that will join Visayas and Mindanao qualifiers in the national championship set early September in Bacolod City.

Air Force will bannered by past and present members of the national squad, according to PFF president Rene Z. Adad.

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Northwoods, Manila Golf stun rivals

NEWCOMER Royal Northwoods of Bulacan and darkhorse Manila Golf Club pulled off shocking upsets at the resumption of the 2002 Federation Golf League in various venues over the weekend.

Royal Northwoods served notice of its title aspiration by bundling out Manila Southwoods, 2.5-1.5, behind victories by Obet Samson-Boy Unson in aggregate and Danny Dalija-Sunny Donato in bestball.

It was a rousing debut for the visiting Bulakeños who also got a crucial draw in scramble play from Omar Dungca and Edwin Rodriguez that more than made up for the loss of Gov. Tommy Joson-August Cruz in the high-low format.

The Manila Golf squad made sure to have its role in the weekend of shocker after blanking their host Riviera.

Manila Golf didn't allow their matches to go farther than 15 holes as the tandems of Alex Prieto-Richie Garcia (aggregate), JP Reyes-Joey Yuhico (high-low), OV Espiritu-Giovanni Chuaunsu (best-ball) and Manoling Chan-Dennis Valdes (scramble) demolished their respective opponents.

A couple of draws punctuated an eventful weekend that saw Sta. Elena drawing by a visiting Mimosa and Orchard also splitting the game point with their host Alabang in Week 2 of the Fed League where 15 of the country's most exclusive clubs are seeing action.

Rene Tayag and Francis Limjoco salvaged the draw for Mimosa when they took the aggregate format on the last hole. After Jingy Tuason-Jing Montano (best-ball) and Dickie Dizon-Herbert Chan (high-low) had given Sta. Elena two wins, Mimosa stayed alive on the scramble win of Kim Chang Hoi-Noni Noel.

Alabang needed just draw from Seve Roxas-Chua and Farley Ampil against Dante Salud to clinch the match. But they lost the last hole and yielded the standoff.

Winning for Alabang were Sengyo Kato-Edwin Arcilla (aggregate) and Louie Lim-Vic Guzman (high-low) while Powie Tugade and Albert de Jesus also took the scramble for Orchard.

Ardina wins again, rules US Kids meet

By Jong Arcano

ARDINA

DOTTIE Ardina of the Philippines accomplished a back-to-back romp in America when she posted another runaway victory in the 8-under division of the US Kids World Golf Championship at the Kingsmill Golf Resort course in Williamsburg, Virginia on Saturday (Sunday in Manila).

Ardina, a third grader at the Child Jesus Academy in Laguna, proved too classy for her rivals with her 9-hole rounds of 26 and 28 at a par-35 course designed for her age-group. She finished far ahead of two US bets with an 18-hole total of 54, 16 under par.

The 8-year-old Ardina's win came on the heels of her Junior World triumph on July 18 where she also dominated her class.

Southern California entry Courtney Hooton wound up eight strokes behind the Philippine Airlines-sponsored Ardina with a 62 and Alexis Thomson of Florida checked in third with a 63 in the tourney that attracted entries from 37 countries and 50 states of the US.

Two other Philippine entries, Miguel Tabuena and Mia Piccio, also posted impressive finishes. Seven-year-old Tabuena tied for second in the boys 8-under only to lose in the countback and settled for fifth while Mia Piccio checked in sixth in the girls 12 years division.

Earlier, Ardina got herself another award when she won the pitching contest while Piccio topped the driving contest.

Merwin Mediana, president of Jungolf Foundation, said that they are preparing a big welcome for Ardina who will fly back home two weeks from now. "She has really conquered America this summer and she deserves a grand welcome," said Mediana.

South Korean 3 shots ahead; Rosales withdraws

DUBLIN, Ohio—Seeking her second win in Ohio in three weeks, South Korea's Mi Hyun Kim shot a 5-under-par 67 Saturday to forge a three-stroke lead heading into the final round of the Wendy's Championship for Children.

Filipino Jenny Rosales, meanwhile, withdrew in the second round. She opened with an 81 on Friday. Kim won the Giant Eagle LPGA Classic two weeks ago in Youngstown, Ohio, for her fourth victory in as many years on tour. *AP*

Barlow moves up

CASTLE ROCK, Colorado —Craig Barlow birdied the last three holes to inch ahead of Steve Lowery and claim the third-round lead Saturday in The International.

Sergio Garcia made the most noise in the third round, carding an eagle and eight birdies to move into fifth place.

Norman and Stricker had 20-point totals, along with Ernie Els. Ian Leggatt and Geoff Ogilvy stood at 18. *AP*

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All set for 'Alay' concert

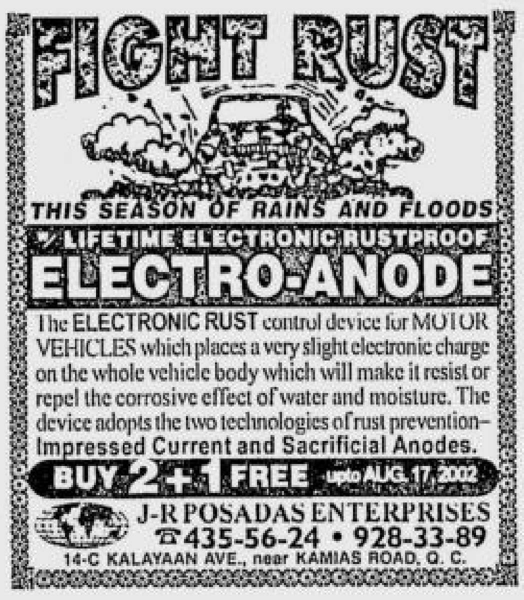
THE ICONS of Philippine sports take centerstage with their fellow nationals and entertainers this Friday (Aug. 9) when the first ever Alay Sa Gintong Medalya benefit concert is staged at the Philsports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City.

Tickets to the concert, which topbills Gary Valenciano and Vina Morales, meanwhile, are still available at all Shoemart TicketNet outlets. Tickets are pegged at P800, P600, P350 and P100.

Paeng Nepomuceno, Lydia de Vega Mercado, Onyok Velasco, Monsour del Rosario, Efren "Bata" Reyes, and even Eric Buhain, chair of the Philippine Sports Commission, among others, will also take the spotlight on concert night.

Also performing on concert night that begins at 8 p.m. are South Border, True Faith, Parokya Ni Edgar, Jay Cayuca, RJ Rosales, Mon Faustino and the Powerplay, John Lapus and the Sex Bomb Dancers.

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. headed by chair Ephraim Genuino, Samsung Electronics Phils., Centrum, Air Philippines, WG&A SuperFerry, Philtranco, Brunswick-Bong Coo sports, Peak Sports and Bank of Commerce are the PSC's official partners for the concert.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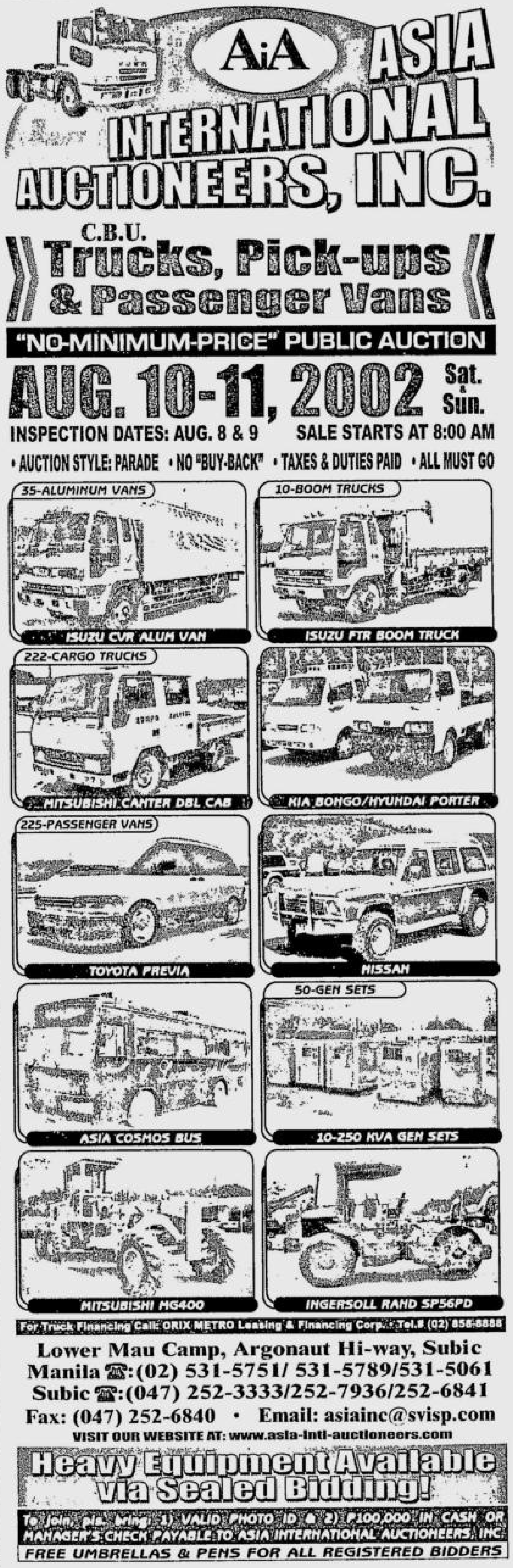
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SPORTSWATCH

Las Piñas derby slated Aug. 26, 28

WHO among the gamefowl breeders successfully produced the winning lines this year? This will be partly answered on Aug. 26 and 28, when the country's leading breeders parade and test their new battlecrosses in Las Piñas Cockpit's Annual 5-Stag Derby, traditionally the first stag derby of the stagfigthing season. Proceeds of this fund-raising sports affair will go to the Clean and Green project of Las Piñas City Mayor Nene Aguilar. LPC manager Alex Tobias said that screening of stags started last Thursday, Aug. 1. Interested parties may call 873-1040 or 871-4343 and 871-4345. Screening at Las Piñas Cockpit is every Saturday and Sunday, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. At stake is guaranteed prize of P500,000, while entry fee is P11,000.

LA Lakers may lose their 'voice'

LOS ANGELES—Longtime Lakers broadcaster Chick Hearn, who gave the NBA lexicon such phrases as "slam dunk" and "air ball," has probably called his last game, his neurologist said Saturday after performing surgery for brain hemorrhaging. "If he has a full recovery in terms of his motor functions he will very likely have speech difficulty, so I will foresee that he will have a difficulty to be announcing," the neurologist, Dr. Asher Taban, told reporters outside Northridge Hospital Medical Center. Asked if the 85-year-old broadcaster had called his last Lakers game, Dr. Taban said, "unfortunately it's probable." Hearn was taken to the hospital from his San Fernando home Friday night after neighbors saw him fall in his backyard and called 911. *AP*

Top drivers joining PCSO Grand Prix

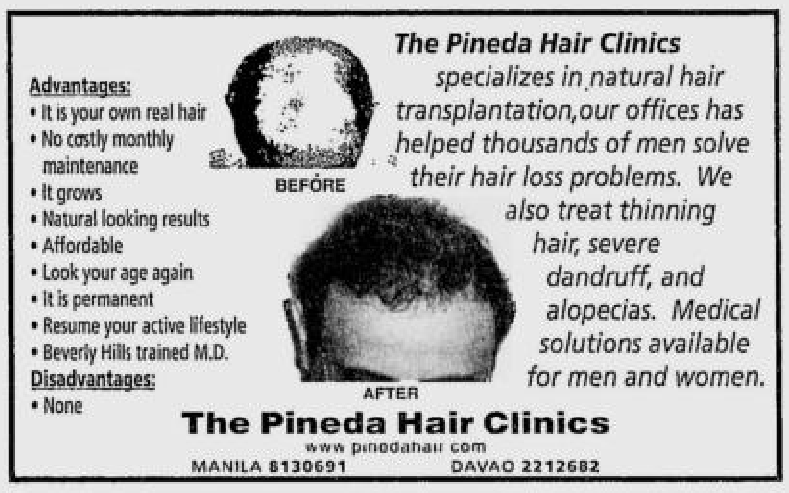
THE SHOWDOWN for the Driver of the Year award continues as the most prestigious Philippine National Touring Car Championship stages Rounds 5 and 6 of the 2002 PCSO Grand Prix on Aug. 10 and 11 at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas. It will be a tough battle among the country's best drivers led by Caltex Havoline-Autoplus' Jody Coseteng, Fujitsu Team Tom's Jojo Silverio and Vincent Floirendo and Petron-SRA's Kookie Ramirez in this event sanctioned by the Automotive Association of the Philippines (formerly PMA) and sponsored by the Batangas Racing Circuit Association Board of Governors, Pilipinas Shell, Toyota Motors Phil., MOF Shipping, Norkis-Yamaha, Marlboro, Casino Filipino, Kilton Motors Corp. and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office through Chair Livia "Honeygirls" de Leon. Coseteng leads the series with 60 points after sweeping the past four legs aboard his reliable Honda Civic prepared by Autoplus. For further details, call the Batangas Racing Circuit office at 817-2469 and project director Lot M. Tan or Rose at 817-2241.

Sunday running clinic at QC Circle

THE RUNNEX-Pharmaton Sunday Running Clinic, in coordination with the Quezon City Parks and Development Foundation Inc. (QCPDFI), is almost five months now in giving and providing free weekly running clinic to resident of Quezon City and out of school youths at the Quezon City Memorial Circle. The Sunday Running Clinic covers a 10-month training concepts with lectures, techniques in scientific running and endurance buildup which is necessary in long-distance running. Activities starts at 5:45 every Sunday morning in the event sponsored by Pharmaton Capsule. For further information about the Sunday Running clinic, call Amante Pangilinan, clinic training director at 926-7070 or Pol de Leon, acting Runnex president at 924-2447.

Welsh ends Thorpe's record drive

MANCHESTER, England—Ian Thorpe said his silver behind Matt Welsh in the backstroke Saturday didn't mean he'd failed in his bid to match Mark Spitz's all-time medal haul at a major meet. Spitz won seven golds at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Thorpe won five gold from his first five finals and was in contention for a sixth until teammate Welsh, the 100-meters world champion, put a stop to it. It wasn't a failure in Thorpe's mind. He didn't lose to Welsh, he explained, he'd placed second. Welsh set a Games record 54.72 seconds in the 100 to win his second gold at Manchester, while Thorpe was just outside his PB in 55.38. Malaysia's Alex Lim was third in 55.44. *AP*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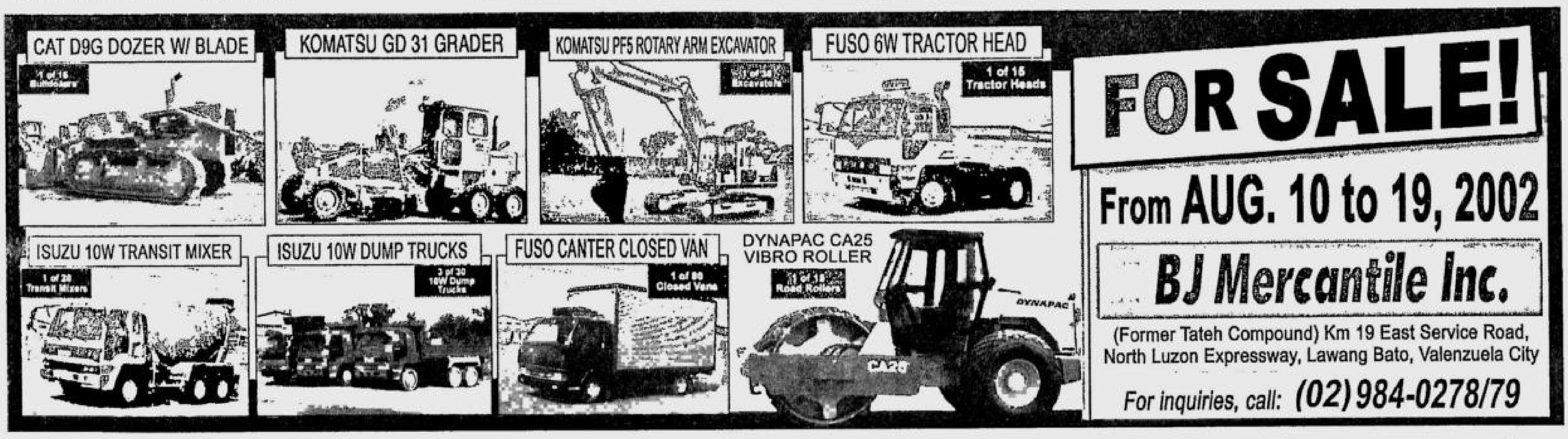
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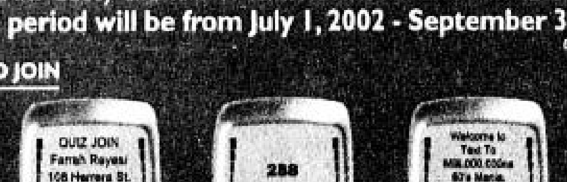

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2nd Monthly Draw	August 26, 2002	2 winners of ₱50,000.00 each
Week 9	September 2, 2002	2 winners of ₱25,000.00 each
Week 10	September 9, 2002	2 winners of ₱25,000.00 each
Week 11	September 16, 2002	2 winners of ₱25,000.00 each
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Transport groups protest toll hike

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ERIK ARAZAS

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PROTESTS against the toll fee increases are no longer a lonely battle by middle-class subdivision residents.

Militant and transport groups yesterday said they will join homeowners associations in a protest motorcade on the South Luzon Expressway on Wednesday.

"We want to make a statement," said Ray Junia of the Transportasyon at Mamamayan Laban sa Toll Fee, a newly formed alliance of cause-oriented and transport groups and subdivision owners in southern Metro Manila and in peripheral areas.

"We want to show the government that the toll increase is a burden not only for a few middle-class homeowners but for the public at large as well," he said.

He said the motorcade will kick off a series of protest actions that will include the honking of horns when motorists pass through toll gates.

Teodoro Casino, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, yesterday said the local chapter of his group would join the protest action.

Medardo Roda, president of the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide (Piston), also confirmed the participation of Piston, the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines (Fejodap), and two other major transport groups.

Roda said the alliance would call for a rollback of toll rates following the second round

TRANSPORT/ p. A26

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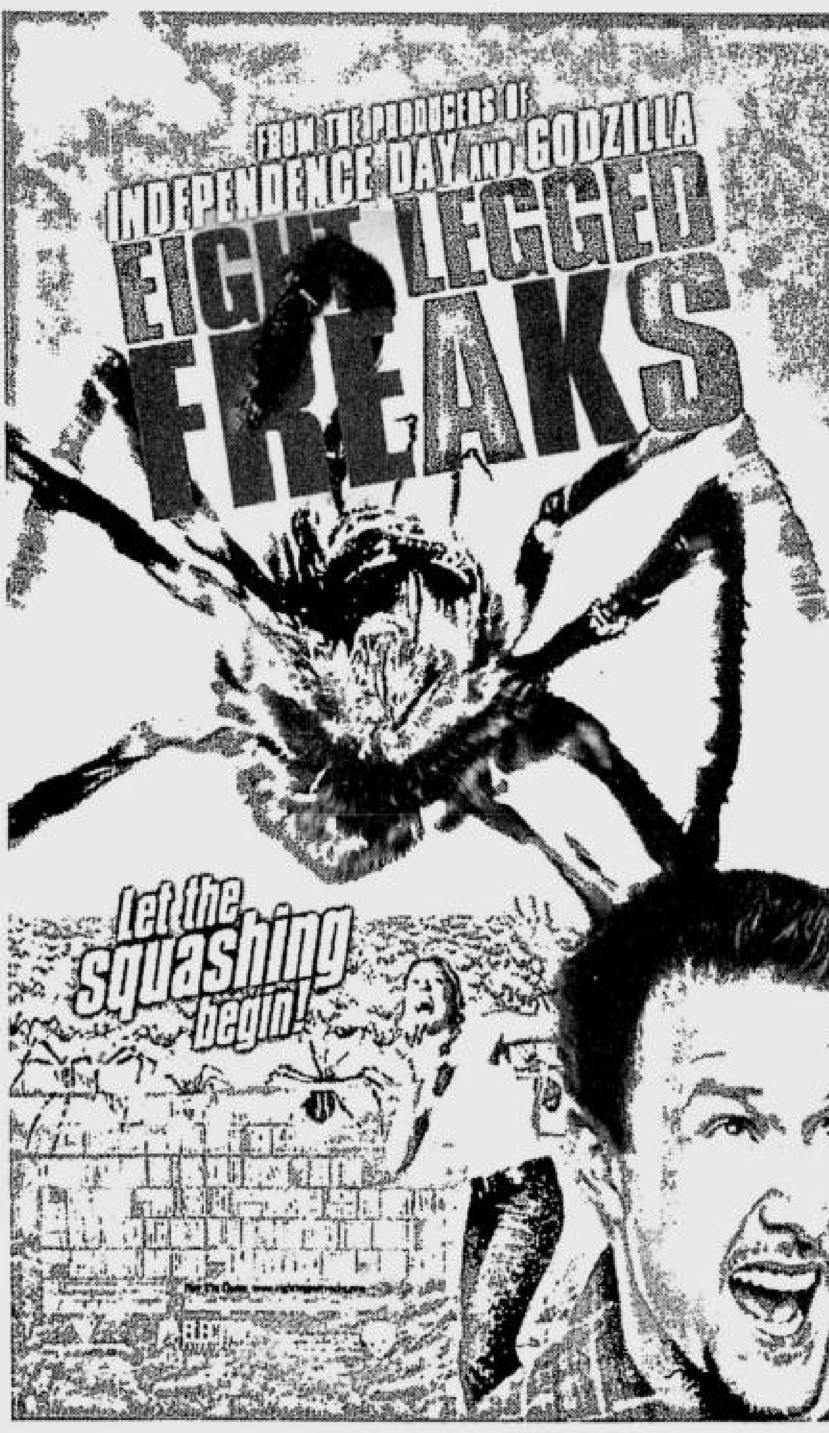
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Cardinal Sin 'snubs' urban poor groups

By Christian V. Esguerra

MANILA Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin on Saturday "snubbed" urban poor groups who went to his residence to seek his help regarding the displacement of about 100,000 informal settlers in Metro Manila.

Instead of receiving the 20 urban poor leaders, Sin received Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople who paid him a courtesy call, said Ted Añana of the Urban Poor Associates.

"We are really disappointed with the Cardinal," Añana told the INQUIRER yesterday. "Was it an indication that the Church is neglecting the poor? We hope not."

He said the community leaders arrived 30 minutes ahead of their 3 p.m. schedule at Sin's residence in Villa San Miguel, Mandaluyong City. Ople arrived about 3 p.m. and Sin accommodated him instead, he added.

The supposed snub seemed to contradict Sin's July 3 letter to Malacañang in which he urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to "join our efforts (in) uplifting the plight of the poorest of the poor among us."

In the letter, the Cardinal also asked the President to urge concerned government agencies to "implement sustainable development for the urban poor" as prescribed by the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.

The letter came after the July 2000 Archdiocesan Social Justice Summit which "extensively discussed the issue of the poor's lack of access to decent shelter."

Before going to the meeting, the urban poor leaders held a news conference in Quezon City where they urged the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to heed Sin's call in his letter and suspend the eviction of about 100,000 families from their homes to give way to government projects.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando had reportedly said the shanties of informal settlers would have to be demolished in the implementation of the government's flood-control projects in the metropolis.

The urban poor groups claimed that about 70,000 families living around the Laguna Lake would be displaced once the government proceeds with the P2.9-billion road dike project that would supposedly solve flooding in Taguig, Rizal, and parts of Laguna.

About 30,000 families would be displaced by the flood-control project in northern Metro Manila, and 6,000 families would be affected by the clearing of Pasig River, the groups added.

METROBRIEFS

Student hunted

POLICE are looking for Technological University of the Philippines student Julius Gentugao, 22, for the fatal stabbing of his brother-in-law, Emelito Calizana, 45, on Friday in Tondo, Manila. SPO4 Alfredo Salazar said investigators fear a cover-up because they found the walls and the stairs of the apartment where the stabbing supposedly happened had been washed clean of blood. Neighbors said they heard Calizana and Gentugao arguing in front of the apartment about 9:30 p.m. on Friday. A chase ensued, and then they heard Calizana screaming in pain, they said. *Jerome Aning*

Raped in jeep

ANACLETO CAIMPON, of Binata Street in Bagong Barrio, Caloocan, is facing rape and child abuse charges after a 12-year-old girl accused him of raping her inside a parked passenger jeepney last July 28, police said. The girl said Caimpon, 56, dragged her into the jeepney, which was parked in front of the National Housing Authority Building on J. De Jesus Street about midnight and raped her. Police are also filing charges of illegal possession of a deadly weapon against Caimpon after a 12-inch fan knife was found on him. *Tina Santos*

Youth shoots self

NEIGHBORS of Enoel Dimalanta, 17, on Lapu-lapu Avenue Extension in Caloocan saved his life when they rushed him to the Tondo Medical Center shortly after he allegedly shot himself in the head with a .38 revolver Thursday night, police said. Dimalanta tried to kill himself in his rented room after his girlfriend Katrina Cruz, 27, refused to live with him, police said. The gunshot alerted some of his neighbors who broke into Dimalanta's room and found him bleeding on the floor, after Cruz had left. They also found the gun loaded with five live bullets beside him on the floor. *Tina Santos*

Freeloader nabbed

CALOOCAN CITY postman John Macadangdang, 46, is facing charges of estafa and usurpation of authority after he introduced himself as a policeman to avoid paying for the liquor he drank in Malabon City on Thursday night, police said. Macadangdang, a postman III at the Caloocan City Central Post Office and a resident of Tanza, Navotas, claimed he was a cop and refused to pay his bill in an eatery in Barangay Hulong Duhat, Malabon. The store owner sought the help of barangay officials who brought Macadangdang to the police station, said PO1 Romeo Cruz. *Tina Santos*

Urine and shabu

POLICE arrested Edmundo B. Muntialegre for urinating in a public place, but he might also face charges of illegal drug possession after police found on him a sachet containing what could be shabu. Muntialegre, jobless and a resident of Barangay Olympia, Makati, was arrested Friday night by village watchmen for violating City Ordinance No. 99, which prohibits urinating in public. The suspect's neighbor, Laarni T. Cruz, had complained that Muntialegre had urinated on her front gate on several instances. Police sent the contents of the sachet to the crime lab for identification. *Leila Salaverria*

1 dead, 3 hurt

AN UNIDENTIFIED man was killed and three other people were injured in a vehicular accident on Friday in Quezon City, police said. Injured were Allan Agustin, 25, of Pasig City; Robert Ravel of Antipolo City; and a woman identified only as Rose, said PO2 Melchor Rosales of the Central Police District Traffic Sector 3. He said the Daewoo Racer driven by Jonathan Casta, 26, hit the unidentified man when Casta tried to avoid a truck on Katipunan Avenue. Those injured were Casta's passengers, police said. *Alcuin Papa*

SUNDAY ON WHEELS

The rides are far cheaper than in theme parks, the hours are unlimited, the Sunday morning weather is balmy and the air is, well, not noticeably dirty at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Complex in Pasay City.

ERIK ARAZAS

Young trader shot dead in QC robbery

BUSINESSMAN Jovencio Wong, 22, was shot dead when he tried to help his mother who was being robbed by three men in Quezon City late Saturday afternoon.

Wong, of Don Enrique Heights, Quezon City, was shot in the right breast and died at the Philippine Heart Center, police said.

Wong and his mother Nancy, 48, were closing the family's hardware shop on Commonwealth Avenue for the day when three men arrived, police said.

One of the men poked a handgun at Mrs. Wong and grabbed her handbag, which contained P200,000, police said.

Jovencio came and tried to come to his mother's rescue, but one of the men shot him. The suspects fled on board a red Nissan Sentra, police said. *Agnes E. Donato*

Woman jumps to death on the way to a new job

SHIRLEY Tibog, 23, did not even get to meet her new employers after she arrived in Manila on Saturday morning from Davao Oriental. Tibog, who was to work as a maid for a family in Metro Manila, died from head injuries after jumping off a moving jeepney during a holdup in Manila's North Harbor.

Detective David Tuazon of the Western Police District homicide section said Tibog's companion, Marlet Aldovino, 20, lost her Nokia 3310 to the robber.

Tibog and another housemaid, 17 years old, had just arrived at Pier 14 and were fetched by Aldovino. They boarded a jeep towards Divisoria, the detective said.

At the corner of Lakandula Street, and Road 10, Aldovino's cellular phone rang. That was when four men pulled out knives and announced the holdup. One of them grabbed Aldovino's phone.

Tuazon said the frightened Tibog tried to get off the jeep but one man grabbed her by the hair and pulled her back. Tibog managed to free herself and jumped, but hit the ground head first, the detective said.

The culprit was slim, brown-complexioned, 5-foot-3 to 5-foot-4, 20 to 25 years old, and was wearing a yellow jacket and denim shorts, Tuazon said. *Jerome Aning, Philip C. Tubeza*

Crass commercialism and the RP Youth squad crashing

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

CRASS commercialism, the main suspect, was given the wrong name here last time. The culprit was made to sound like one unidiomatic accident: crash commercialism.

Sorry for that typo. That sentence should have read thus: "The sorry state of basketball in the country, mainly wracked by divisiveness and crass commercialism, has reached a very alarming stage."

Anyway, the truth is that harsh, shameless sales wars appear to have overtaken all other greedy elements in the drive to cripple and bring down basketball here.

OK, you need not wonder why, despite all the attendant ills, basketball has remained the most popular game in the country.

It's because basketball, despite its hideous shape, continues to sell as it gets rammed down our throats through all available means of media, mainly television.

***

A concerned reader, Bill Amor, has written an intriguing treatise that calls for a ban, by legislation, on the massive TV/radio exposure of basketball games in a bid to give other worthy games, like football, a chance to grow here. (We'll try to reprint portion of that work later.)

Out there in Marikina City, Boy Lu Yong, who has been spending his time and money in a bid to wean kids from "useless, worthless basketball," swears our youth should try to excel in other games which could bring the needed dollars into the country.

"We have been using up a good part of our dollar reserves paying imports and Fil-Ams in the PBA, but so far this move has only led to the deterioration of the game of basketball here," he explained. "Why can't we start developing other games which could bring in the dollars, the way Efren 'Bata' Reyes and Django Bustamante do when they return from tournaments abroad?"

Well, this just shows that, unlike before, not everybody in the neighborhood is totally sold on basketball.

***

In fact, basketball's growing army of critics would be glad to note that the most popular game in RP is no longer revered as a near-religion.

We are no longer in that blind, hysterical period when Barangay Ginebra was in the mind and on the lips of countless diehard fans, who would cry and refuse to eat whenever their team would suffer defeat.

No need anymore to ask the Social Weather Stations. It has become clear that billiards, thanks to the exploits of our world-class competitors like the cool, charming Bata Reyes and the tragic but heroic Django Bustamante, has eaten into the once unshakeable popularity of basketball.

Let's hope leaders in other games would be able to take advantage of the situation.

***

This early, it would not be too risky to predict that, at the rate it's been performing, the RP National basketball team could be courting impending doom in the Asian Games next month.

But Philippine basketball actually suffered a major blow with the crash of the RP Youth squad in Kuala Lumpur last week. That national team, supposedly composed of the most promising teenaged players in the country, was expelled in two. It was booted out of contention after it dropped its first two assignments, against Indonesia and Thailand.

With that crash by the RP Youth team, what got exposed was the truly miserable state of the game in the country.

A pity because our Youth team had always represented the future of basketball here. The Youth squads of the past had in fact sustained the turnover of future RP basketball heroes.

***

Bogs Adornado, Manny Paner, Yoyong Martirez, et al did it first in 1970 in the inaugural Asian Youth basketball championship in Seoul.

Two years later, shortly after the declaration of martial law, another bunch of future basketball stars headed by the likes of Mon Fernandez, Jimmy Noblezada and Rino Salazar retained the Asian Youth title here in Manila.

In 1974, there was the group led by Bernard Fabiosa and Freddie Hubalde that reigned supreme in the Asian Youth cage wars.

That rich legacy was somewhat tarnished when the China team beat the Philippines in Bangkok late in 1979. But in the next Asian Youth basketball championship here, an RP team led by Hec Calma and which would later form the core of Danding Cojuangco's legendary NCC squad regained the crown before a screaming fullhouse crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

***

Our amateur basketball officials will predictably shrug off the latest debacle suffered by the RP Youth squad in Malaysia.

But these alleged game authorities, given a bit of sound leadership, should be made to start a serious redevelopment program that would concentrate on the new game basics.

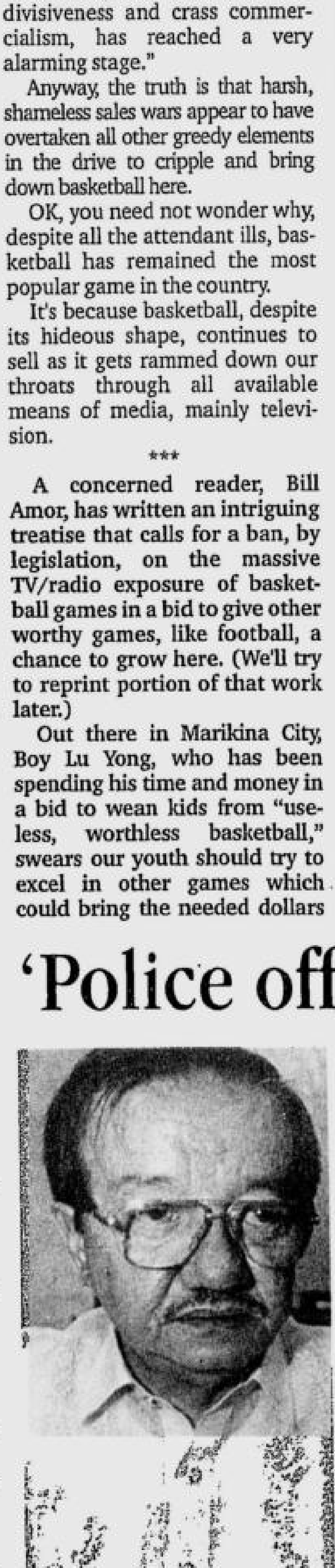
The fall of the RP Youth team becomes extremely sickening because it happened in a tournament among Southeast Asian nations which past RP squads did not even take seriously.

Unfortunately, we can no longer expect our amateur basketball leaders in the BAP to make a bid for future rearming.

Why bother at all when basketball, no matter what happens to it here, will not be lacking in commercial backers?

No need to improve on the poor product for as long as it continues to sell.

'Police officials afraid of losing power'



TRINIDAD

By Leila B. Salaverria

THERE are police officials who are afraid of losing their power once Metro Manila mayors gain control of the local police, according to Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad.

"Certainly, they would lose some powers ... they would lose their command," Trinidad said last week when asked if he believes that there are officers who oppose the transfer of command to the mayors.

But Trinidad, spokesperson of the Metro Manila Mayors' League, said there is a need to consider a new setup because crime has gone up under the present arrangement.

"Statistics have proven that (crime has risen)," he said in an interview on Saturday. "The PNP (Philippine National Police) admits that there is an increase in criminality. It shows that the system is not all right. The system has been in effect for so long. Why not change it?"

He also promised that the mayors will exert all effort to curb criminality in Metro Manila once they have the additional powers.

On Friday, Trinidad urged Interior and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina to prepare an executive order placing the local police under the mayors' control upon the order of the President herself.

Trinidad had said that Metro Manila mayors are mere "paper tigers" because, despite their powers, it's still the PNP that exercises absolute control over the local police.

Lina earlier said that under the present setup, Metro Manila mayors have "awesome" powers, including the power to suspend police officers for 30 days. But Trinidad called this power a mere "slap on the wrist."

Trinidad yesterday also allayed fears that the mayors would abuse their authority and turn into warlords once they gain control of the local police.

"If mayors would turn into warlords, *bahala na ang tao sa kanya* (It's up to the people to decide what to do with him)," he said. "Anyway, a mayor does not need control over the police to become a warlord. He only needs men with guns."

He also said the Metro Manila mayors would meet on Tuesday to prepare their position paper on the draft of the executive order, which the mayors are expecting to receive.

Transport ...

From p. A25

of increases last month.

Completing the alliance are the Confederation of Truckers Associations of the Philippines, the Southern Luzon Bus Operators Association, and the Movement for Responsible Enterprise, according to Junia.

Roda said protesters aim to gather at least 100 vehicles to join the motorcade which will start at the Alabang entrance of the South Luzon Expressway.

The vehicles will exit at the Nichols toll gate where they will join other protesters by noon, Junia said.

"We want the Toll Regulatory Board to revert the toll to last year's rates," Junia said. "Actually, there was no legitimate reason to increase rates this year."

Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. jacked up the toll rates last January and in July, citing the need to pay for loans it incurred in building the Skyway System in 1995.

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GEENA DAVIS

Mother to the mouse

By Ruben V. Nepales
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—"How could that rumor have ever gotten started? Because we're sooo dead."

Oscar-winning actress Geena Davis is wondering aloud when asked about talks of a sequel to "Thelma & Louise," the landmark Ridley Scott feminist-buddy film that starred her and Susan Sarandon.

She adds, "What would possibly happen?"

Instead of moping for a reprise of her Thelma role, which made her a cult figure among feminist fans, Davis is relishing being a mother to a mouse onscreen and to her first baby in real life. In a hotel interview, this member of Mensa, the society of people whose IQ is in the top 2 percent of the population, talks about coming back as a parent to a rodent in "Stuart Little 2" and the joys of having a three-month-old girl.

Asked how motherhood is working for her in real life, Davis declares, "It's going very well. I can't say that I was able to take my fake parenting skills from the movies and apply them to real life but it's really wonderful. And if I ever do have a mouse, I know how to make clothes with a little hole for the tail."

Alizeh is Davis' baby with husband no. 4, Reza Jarrahy, a Beverly Hills neurosurgeon. Previous husbands are Jeff Goldblum, with whom she made the hit "The Fly"; "Die Hard 2" director Renny Harlin who directed her in two flops ("Cutthroat Island" and "The Long Kiss Goodnight"); and Richard Emmolo, a New York restaurateur.

Not for kids

The Academy best supporting actress for "The Accidental Tourist" was not pregnant during the filming of the highly anticipated sequel to "Stuart Little," a surprise hit that grossed more than $300 million in 1999.

"We did one tiny additional shot later when I was five months pregnant," Davis says. "They (digitally) erased my tummy." She jokes about telling her baby, "You've already been cut from a movie. Don't go in this business."

On whether she will allow Alizeh to become a child actress, the star of "Beetlejuice" and "A League of Their Own" says, "I think that from visiting sets she won't want to. She'll see how unutterably boring it is to wait around the set all day. But if she desperately needs to, I hope she will at least wait till she's grown up to do it because it's not fun for kids."

Could she be talking from her experience acting opposite twins, Anna and Ashley Hoelck, who alternately play baby sister to Stuart (voiced over again by Michael J. Fox) and George (popular child actor Jonathan Lipnicki)? She tells the assembled journalists the challenges of making babies interact with an invisible mouse (Stuart is digitally inserted later) during filming.

The spot

"The twins are the most adorable and sweet kids," begins the actress who turned down the Sharon Stone role in "Basic Instinct." "But they don't know they're in a movie. They don't know what a movie is. How can Anna, for example, possibly understand that her brother is an invisible mouse? And that she should be looking right here (points at a spot on a table) where there's nothing.

"I was always the one carrying Anna so I took it upon myself to coach her," she says. Before a take, she would point with her finger at the spot where Stuart supposedly is. Anna would look at that spot but as soon as the cameras started rolling, her eyes would wander. "Oh," Davis sighs at the recollection. "And she weighs like 400 pounds," she quips.

In one scene, "the only thing we needed Anna to do was to look at me," she continues. "She had no interest in looking at me. We were going crazy. She was falling asleep. Finally we all got the idea to use a laser pointer on my forehead. She appears to be listening to me but she's really looking at the red dot on my forehead."

Nothing there

"In the first movie, when we had never seen what Stuart was going to look like, I kept saying, please make sure he looks good because I'm really committing to this relationship. If he looks goofy, I'd look like an idiot.

"So when I finally saw the movie, and he looks so real, I said, 'Oh thank God. He looks great!' So the second was easier because now I knew what he was going to look like."

Davis has developed a technique in acting with the digital Stuart. "You have to get over the fact that nothing is there and the crew is going to think that you're crazy. It's like any other acting except that you're not getting anything back. It's all in your head. I just get to the point where I really feel like I'm connecting to something."

Straight parents

In this second outing of a mouse adopted by a human family in New York, everybody is back, including Nathan Lane, who as the voice of Snowbell, the Chinchilla Persian cat diva, almost runs away with the movie. Melanie Griffith joins the cast as the voice of the bird Margalo, who was not in the first movie but is a principal character in the book that the film was based on. "Stuart Little" was written half a century ago by E.B. White, a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation awardee who also penned "Charlotte's Web" and "Elements of Style," a slim book that continues to be a handy guide to writers to this day.

Davis and her co-star, Hugh Laurie, play such good, straight parents in this comedy-adventure geared for the entire family.

Archery

To amuse herself in between takes, she started painting and carving eggs. "Every day she set up a table to do new things," says co-star Laurie. "One day, she had a welder's mask on. She was always building or making something."

A semi-finalist in the US Olympic archery team in 1999, she shot arrows in between filming. Laurie dared her: "If I stood with an apple on my head, how far away could you be confident that you could shoot that apple? She mentioned a distance that was a lot farther than I thought. But she wouldn't do it. You should watch her do to this thing. It's really awesome. She is an amazon."

"I like that he trusts me so implicitly," Davis says of Laurie. "I wouldn't do it (shoot arrows on an apple perched atop Laurie's head) but I could."

Lipnicki, asked if he would also face Davis' arrows with an apple on his head, said yes but with "pads all over my body."

Nuts over eggs

"I come up with bizarre hobbies," Davis smiles. "In the first movie, I got into carving pumpkins. While we were doing the second movie, I read about carving Easter eggs in Martha Stewart magazine. I went a little nuts with it.

"Now I'm trying to make a set of eggs. You open the ostrich egg, and then there's an emu egg, then a goose egg and so on. It's very painstaking. I already have all the eggs. I even have a lovebird egg. I'm going to paint a little scene inside each egg."

How do you do all that? "I'm crazy," proclaims the star of a TV sitcom, "The Geena Davis Show," that got axed in 2000.

Did we mention that she plays the piano, flute and drums and that she draws cartoon strips? And yes, she speaks Swedish fluently as a result of her foreign exchange student stint in Sweden.

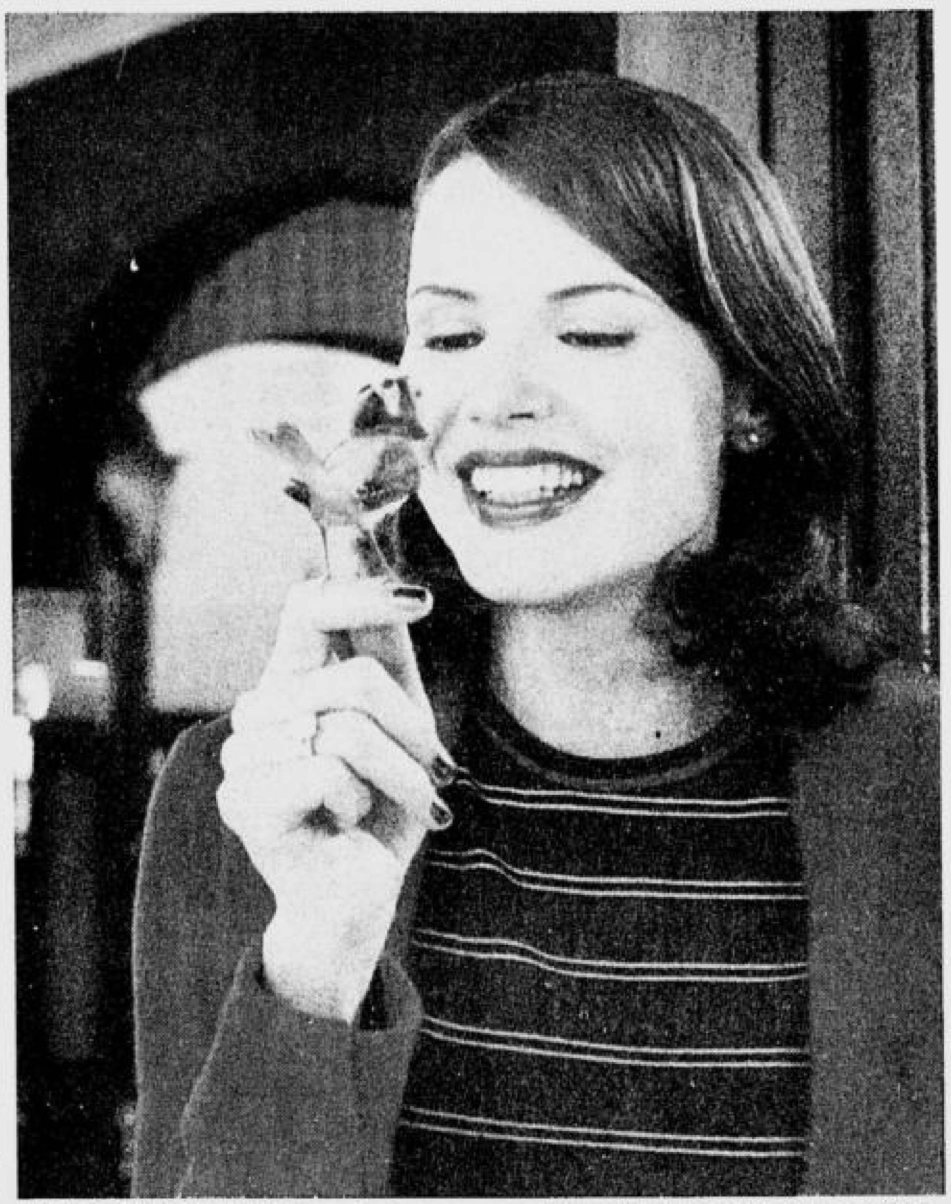
Entertaining

Is she really hard to please so as a result, we don't see more of her onscreen?

"I'm really hard to please," she confirms. "I always have been. I've always felt that my life is so entertaining. A movie project has to be something that I can't wait to do. Fortunately, I haven't had to worry about money. If I had to pick something just because I needed the rent money, it would be different.

"I'd rather wait and amuse myself in some other way if there isn't any film project that really appeals to me. I don't want to just play the wife of somebody who's going to go off and do something amazing while I worry at home. I'd rather wait until there's a part where I get to do something.

There's a few roles for women."



STUART'S MOMMY! 'If I ever do have a mouse, I know how to make clothes with a little hole for the tail.'

Scarce roles

Commenting on reaching that age in Hollywood where significant women roles start getting scarce, Davis, who is 46 (husband Reza is 15 years her junior), sighs. "Unfortunately it's a fact of the business for a long time that the older you get, the fewer parts there are.

"I just read that only 18 percent of women's parts go to women over 40. Only 25 percent of all parts are for women. So you're talking about a pretty small number."

This afternoon, though, she has never looked more attractive. Save for the crow's-feet (even Tom Cruise has them now) around her large brown eyes, this former Victoria's Secret model looks almost as youthful as she did in her feature film debut in "Tootsie"—as the almost nude actress who discomfits the cross-dressing Dustin Hoffman in a dressing room.

Six foot tall and slim, with those naturally full lips, she is a knockout in a white cotton shirt with cutouts in front and slits on the long sleeves and matching white pants.

T & L sequel

The talk goes back to "Thelma & Louise" for which she won a second nomination for an Oscar.

She smiles, "I told Reza that my idea for a sequel starts where the last one ends. The scene is frozen as the car we are in falls from the cliff and it unfreezes. Susan and I scream and there's a close-up of us, hair flying and all. The car hits the ground, there's a big dust ball and 'The End' rolls on the screen."

Pressed for her fondest memory of filming this seminal film which was so popular that it inspired "Thelma & Louise" courses to be taught at certain American universities, Davis complies: "Very clearly the last scene we shot which happens to be the last scene of the movie. It never happens—that you actually shoot the last scene in the film on the last day of filming but we did.

The end

"It was the end, the last day of shooting, the sun was just going down and Susan (Sarandon) and I turn to each other. When we say those last lines and make that decision to go, Susan and I have become really good friends by that time and very close. The experience has been so amazing. It was so magical. I get goosebumps now thinking about it (she rubs an arm).

"Not only were we saying goodbye in the movie but we were saying goodbye to the experience of working together, to being that close and seeing each other everyday. We just did one take and the sun went down. And that was a wrap (she pretends to cry)."

What's next for her? "I don't have anything lined up yet which is fine. I'm just going to take the opportunity to enjoy motherhood. We're just going to take it easy and have fun with the baby."

And now, 'Magandang Umaga, Bayan'

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

"BRANDING," is how ABS-CBN executive **Arlene de Castro** calls it.

After **Noli de Castro**'s weekly public affairs program "Magandang Gabi Bayan" and the daily noontime show "Magandang Tanghali Bayan" comes the daily early morning show, "Magandang Umaga Bayan" or "MUB."

DAILY WAKE-UPPER HOSTS. (standing from left) Julius Babao, Bobby Yan, Erwin Tulfo; with Cheryl Cosim (seated, left) and Pia Guanio.

"Since we already have the noontime show and the public affairs program, we decided it will have easier recall for viewers if we name the morning show 'Magandang Umaga Bayan'," Arlene explains. "When you hear it, you know right away it's an ABS-CBN program."

"Magandang Umaga Bayan" replaces the five-year-old morning show, "Alas Singko y Medya." The marathon, three-hour daily show packs all the issues of the day into a convenient program, 5 to 8 a.m., Monday to Friday.

Most of the "MUB" hosts came from "Alas Singko y Medya"—**Julius Babao**, **Erwin Tulfo**, **Pia Guanio**, **Cheryl Cosim** and **Bobby Yan**.

"The program is more fast-paced and concentrated on the events that happened the day before or the same day," Erwin offers.

Asked why "Alas Singko y Medya" had to be reformatted, Erwin explains: "When the show is more than five years old, viewers sometimes get tired of the format. We need to offer a fresher approach."

The new addition to the morning bunch are **Catherine de Castro** and **Aljo Bendijo**, who will do the newscast every 30 minutes.

Julius, Erwin and Cheryl inject their commentary in a lively conversation, one of the most awaited portions even in "Alas Singko y Medya."

"We decided to retain that portion because we get a lot of feedback doing that," Julius grants.

The 7-8 a.m. newscast sometimes even registers a double-digit rating, so Arlene decided to beef up the newscast for "MUB."

The other members of the "Alas Singko y Medya" team—**Cheri Mercado**, **Connie Sison** and **Mon Ylagan**—moved to the other shows of the network.

Bukidnon Rep. **Miguel Zubiri** anchors a public service portion, "Problema ng Pinoy," on the daily concerns of the average citizen, every Tuesday and Thursday.

"Itanong Mo Kay Atty." is a legal advice feature that will tackle problems sent in by viewers from all parts of the country. It will be anchored by lawyer **Jesse Andres** of the prestigious Pecabar law firm.

The lighter side of the news will be supplied by entertainment experts **Mario Dumaual** and **Jeff Hernando**.

Bobby scouts for campus beauties in "Magandang Babae Bayan," while Pia searches for campus hunks in "Papa ng Bayan."

Box office starrer

COUNT **Cogie Domingo** as the newest addition to the growing list of leading men who have starred with movie princess **Judy Ann Santos**. The first team-up of Judy Ann and Cogie, Regal Films' "Pakisabi na Lang," earned P3.5 million on its opening last July 31, according to the film's drumbeaters.

Congratulations, too, to **Boots Plata**, who directed the film which was inspired by the hit song of the same title by Aiza Seguerra. Also starring in the movie are **Alessandra de Rossi** and **KC Montero**.

It was *Direk* Boots who also megged Judy Ann's first hit, "Sana Naman," under Regal Films.

Other actors who were previously paired with Judy Ann are **Piolo Pascual**, **Wowie de Guzman**, the late **Rico Yan**, **Bong Revilla Jr.** and **Leandro Muñoz**.

Judy Ann was also paired with presidential son **Mikey Macapagal-Arroyo** and former San Juan Mayor **Jinggoy Estrada**.

'No one will sell if no one will buy'

I RECEIVED a copy of an open letter from members of the Intellectual Property Coalition, faxed to the INQUIRER by violinist **John Lesaca**, who supports the anti-piracy crusade of new Videogram Regulatory Board Chair **Bong Revilla Jr.**

The letter was addressed to buyers and users of pirated and counterfeit products.

"Piracy is a crime. There are no ifs and buts about it. Ninety-nine percent of the people think that piracy, like littering, is a harmless crime. What they do not realize is that piracy is only one of the many nefarious activities of major crime organizations in and out of the country and piracy is merely the 'milking cow' of society's greater evils which include illegal drug trafficking, gun smuggling and even child prostitution. . .

"Every time a person buys a pirated CD or a counterfeit product, he is helping, aiding and abetting criminal activities. He is adding to the coffers of the big crime organizations. He is increasing the chances of exposing and subjecting himself and his loved ones to many criminal activities. Pirated and counterfeited goods are therefore never acceptable under any circumstances.

"Please do not distinguish between protecting local and foreign products. Fakery is any form is fakery, regardless of origin, foreign or local.

"We urge the public not to buy counterfeit products. No one will sell if no one will buy. Let us not be the market for these types of products.

"To the mass communicators who wield great influence and visibility among our citizenry, we urge you to help us transform the mindset of those who cannot.

"Finally, we urge our enlightened countrymen to be the role models for our children and the next generations to come."

For sreening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1

1	WINDTALKERS
2	STUART LITTLE 2
3	PAKISABI NA LANG MAHAL KO SIYA
4	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES

G4 GLORIETTA 4

1	MEN IN BLACK 2
2	WINDTALKERS
3	WINDTALKERS 1:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30
4	MEGIDDO
5	SORORITY BOYS
6	STUART LITTLE 2
7	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES

GB1 GREENBELT 1

1	MAKATI CINEMANILA 2002
2	MAKATI CINEMANILA 2002
Cinesuite	RICO J. PUNO IN SOMETHING WONDERFUL AUG. 16 - 9:00 PM

GB3 GREENBELT 3

1	STUART LITTLE 2 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:50, 7:40, 9:30, 11:20
2	WINDTALKERS 12:20, 3:05, 5:50, 8:35, 11:20
3	AMELIE 1:00, 3:35, 6:10, 8:45, 11:20
4	MEN IN BLACK 2 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20, 11:20
5	SORORITY BOYS 11:20, 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20, 11:20

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	WINDTALKERS
2	WINDTALKERS
3	STUART LITTLE 2
4	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
5	MEN IN BLACK 2

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
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EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	MEN IN BLACK 2
2 (SDDS)	STUART LITTLE 2
3 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
4 GOLD (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	STUART LITTLE 2
6 GOLD (SDDS)	SORORITY BOYS
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
8	GALING MO BABES
9	PAKISABI NA LANG .
10	MEGIDDO

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	SORORITY BOYS
3 (DTS)	
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Masagana CINEMA
TEL 551 63 87

1	PAKISABI NA LANG .
2	WINDTALKERS
3	GALING MO BABES

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	STUART LITTLE 2
2	MEGIDDO
3	PAKISABI NA LANG .
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WINDTALKERS
5	GALING MO BABES

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	MEGIDDO
2	HIYAS
3	GALING MO BABES
4	PAKISABI NA LANG .
5	STUART LITTLE 2
6	WINDTALKERS
7	
8	

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	WINDTALKERS

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	MEN IN BLACK 2
2	40 DAYS & 40 NIGHTS

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	GALING MO BABES
3	

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	JIHAD WARRIOR
2	KILABOT AT KEMBOT
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
2	
3	
4	MEN IN BLACK 2
5	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
6	GALING MO BABES
7 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
8 (SDDS)	STUART LITTLE 2
9 (DOLBY)	SORORITY BOYS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	PAKISABI NA LANG . .
2	GALING MO BABES
3	MEN IN BLACK 2
4 (SDDS)	WINDTALKERS
5	GALING MO BABES
6 (DOLBY)	STUART LITTLE 2
7 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	
2	
3	
4	GALING MO BABES
5 (SDDS)	STUART LITTLE 2
6	WINDTALKERS
7 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
8	PAKISABI NA LANG .

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	GALING MO BABES
2	STUART LITTLE 2
3 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
5 (SDDS)	WINDTALKERS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	PAKISABI NA LANG

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	PAKISABI NA LANG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	GALING MO BABES
Lords	PORNOGRAPHER
Jennet	

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
2	GALING MO BABES
3	WINDTALKERS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
2	GALING MO BABES
3	STUART LITTLE 2
4	PAKISABI NA LANG .
5	RESERVE

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	
2	
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6	

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	
2	

Berma
TEL. 879 21 68 / 879 21 67

1	WINDTALKERS
2	GALING MO BABES

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	
2	

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	PAKISABI NA LANG . .
2	GALING MO BABES
3 (DTS)	STUART LITTLE 2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	PAKISABI NA LANG
2 (DTS)	GALING MO BABES
3 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
4	STUART LITTLE 2

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	PAKISABI NA LANG
2 (DOLBY)	STUART LITTLE 2
3 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
4	GALING MO BABES

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	LIFE OR SOMETHING .
2	PAKISABI NA LANG . .
3	MURDER BY NUMBERS
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
2	CASS & CARY
3 (DOLBY)	PETER PAN
4 (DTS)	HIGH CRIMES

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	WINDTALKERS
2	LOVE ME TENDER
3	IKA PITONG GLORYA
4 (DTS)	GALING MO BABES

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
2	GALING MO BABES
3 (DTS)	STUART LITTLE 2
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . .
5	JIHAD WARRIOR

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	PAKISABI NA LANG
2	STUART LITTLE 2
3	GALING MO BABES

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	WINDTALKERS
2	STUART LITTLE 2
3	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	GALING MO BABES
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	CLOSED

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	DOG SOLDIERS
2	PAKISABI NA LANG .
3	MEN IN BLACK 2

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

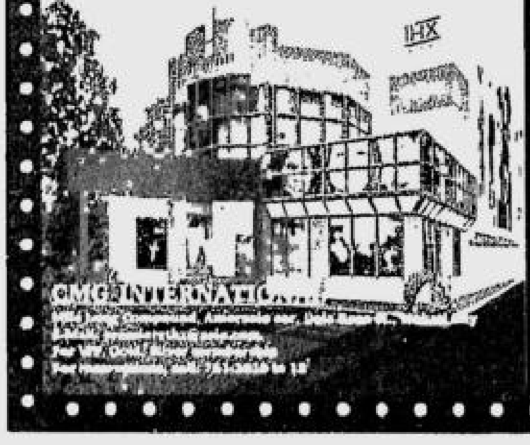
1	DOG SOLDIERS
2	WINDTALKERS
3	PAKISABI NA LANG . .
4	DRAGONFLY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	STUART LITTLE 2
2	GALING MO BABES
3 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
4	DOG SOLDIERS

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS



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SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999
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SM CITY BACOOR
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1	MEN IN BLACK 2
2	MEGIDDO
3	WINDTALKERS
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
5	STUART LITTLE 2
6	GALING MO BABES
7	DOG SOLDIERS
8	SORORITY BOYS

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	GALING MO BABES
2	MEN IN BLACK 2
3	WINDTALKERS
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
5	WINDTALKERS
6	MINORITY REPORT
7	MEGIDDO
8	SORORITY BOYS
9	STUART LITTLE 2
10	DOG SOLDIERS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	GALING MO BABES
2	MEN IN BLACK 2
3	MEGIDDO
4	WINDTALKERS
5	STUART LITTLE 2
6	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
7	WINDTALKERS
8	SORORITY BOYS
9	DOG SOLDIERS
10	MINORITY REPORT
11	MAGENTA
12	GALING MO BABES

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	STUART LITTLE 2
2	WINDTALKERS
3	THIRD WHEEL
4	MEGIDDO
5	MEN IN BLACK 2
6	WINDTALKERS
7	SORORITY BOYS
8	MINORITY REPORT
9	GALING MO BABES
10	HIGH CRIMES
11	DOG SOLDIERS
12	PAKI SABI NA LANG . . .

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 - 6329401

1	HIGH CRIMES
2	SORORITY BOYS
3	DOG SOLDIERS
4	WINDTALKERS
5	HIGH CRIMES
6	MINORITY REPORT
7	THIRD WHEEL
8	MEN IN BLACK 2
9	GALING MO BABES
10	STUART LITTLE 2
11	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
12	MEGIDDO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	MEGIDDO
2	SORORITY BOYS
3	GALING MO BABES
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
5	GALING MO BABES
6	STUART LITTLE 2
7	WINDTALKERS
8	MEN IN BLACK 2

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	SORORITY BOYS
2	DOG SOLDIERS
3	WINDTALKERS
4	STUART LITTLE 2
5	MINORITY REPORT
6	WINDTALKERS
7	GALING MO BABES
8	MEN IN BLACK 2
9	MEGIDDO
10	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	WINDTALKERS
2	WINDTALKERS
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	JUST VISITING
5	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
6	MEN IN BLACK 2
7	GALING MO BABES
8	CROSSROADS

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	SUGAT
2	CLOSED
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	WINDTALKERS
5	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
6	MEN IN BLACK 2
7	CLOSED
8	WINDTALKERS

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	GALING MO BABES
2	WINDTALKERS
3	DOG SOLDIERS
4	MEN IN BLACK 2
5	PAKI SABI NA LANG . . .
6	STUART LITTLE 2

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	GALING MO BABES
2	WINDTALKERS
3	STUART LITTLE 2
4	MEGIDDO

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	WINDTALKERS
2	GALING MO BABES
3	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
4	STUART LITTLE 2

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	WINDTALKERS
2	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
3	THIRD WHEEL
4	SLACKERS
5	WINDTALKERS
6	MEN IN BLACK 2

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
6389781-85 loc 120

1	WINDTALKERS 10:30 FS / 12:00 MF / 2:45 / 5:30 / 8:15 / 10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 1:15 END
2	STUART LITTLE 2 11:30 FS / 12:00 MF / 1:50 / 3:40 / 5:30 / 7: 20 / 9:10 / 10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 12:20 END

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Galleria
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633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	WINDTALKERS
2	WINDTALKERS
3	SORORITY BOYS
4	MEN IN BLACK 2
5	STUART LITTLE 2
6	WINDTALKERS
7	MEGIDDO
8	STUART LITTLE 2
9	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
10	GALING MO BABES

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	WINDTALKERS
2	MEN IN BLACK 2
3	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
4	SORORITY BOYS
5	GALING MO BABES
6	STUART LITTLE 2
7	MEGIDDO

Metro East -
Marcos Hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	MEN IN BLACK 2
2	WINDTALKERS
3	MEGIDDO
4	STUART LITTLE 2
5	GALING MO BABES
6	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
7	WINDTALKERS
8	SORORITY BOYS

Novaliches
935- 3279 - 30

1	WINDTALKERS
2	WINDTALKERS
3	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
4	SORORITY BOYS
5	STUART LITTLE 2
6	MEN IN BLACK 2
7	GALING MO BABES
8	MEGIDDO

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	WINDTALKERS
2	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
3	MEGIDDO
4	STUART LITTLE 2
5	MEN IN BLACK 2
6	GALING MO BABES

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	WINDTALKERS
2	LEGEND OF TITANIC
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	MEN IN BLACK 2
5	SORORITY BOYS
6	KAPALIT

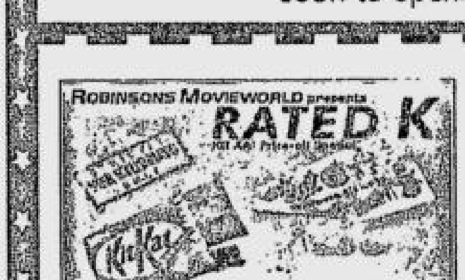
Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	WINDTALKERS
2	LIFE OR SOMETHING LIKE IT
3	A WALK TO REMEMBER
4	PAKISABI NA LANG . . .
5	MEN IN BLACK 2
6	WINDTALKERS

Star Mills-
San Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1027
961 5318 / 5270

1	PAKISABI NA LANG
2	WINDTALKERS
3	GALING MO BABES
4	STUART LITTLE 2
5	MEN IN BLACK 2
6	RESERVED

malabon citisquare-
soon to open



Rated K is showing at the following Robinsons Movieworld:
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01 JULY - 01 AUGUST 2002
Robinsons Movieworld Prepaid MovieCards available at all Robinsons Cinema branches.

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email: htc@netasia-mnl.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
call-a-movie 536- 7812

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Retro music at Le Boulevardier

RELIVE the outrageous '80s, the funky '70s or the swinging '60s every night this August at Le Boulevardier music bar at Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.

Route 70 performs on Mondays, Kislev and Q&A take centerstage on Tuesdays, Soundminds and Moonstrucks get people dancing on Wednesdays.

Kislev plays again on Thursdays. Retrospect, the four-member group famous for dishing out hits from the '70s and '80s, plus tunes from their latest album, "D Luv Bug," heats up the tempo on Fridays, with Rockin' Revival.

The Heat caps a long week as they perform on Saturdays.

Enjoy the live band performances. Happy hours are from 6 to 8:30 p.m., Mondays to Saturdays.

Call 815-9711, local 261 to 263, for more information.

RETROSPECT

'Becker,' ...

From p. A31

action or sci-fi blockbusters:

Clooney plays a psychiatrist in "Solaris." He discovers that the commander of an expedition to the ocean planet called Solaris has died under mysterious circumstances. Other strange events start happening, as well as the appearance of old acquaintances of the crew, some of whom (like the psychiatrists' wife) are dead.

Affleck topbills "Daredevil," where he plays Marvel's legendary action hero, also known as "The Man Without Fear." In actuality, he's a lawyer who's blind, but this four other senses function with superhuman sharpness. By day, the lawyer represents the downtrodden; at night, he's a masked vigilante stalking the dark streets of the city.

Finally, Jackman is reunited with **Halle Berry** in "X-Men 2," the second film in what's planned to be a trilogy.

The trailers of all three movies are currently being shown in theaters screening the war epic, "Windtalkers."

Women's films

LEADING the women's films being show at Cinemanila 2002 is "Heaven" (Aug. 10), featuring Oscar nominee **Cate Blanchett**, and directed by **Tom Tyker**. The movie won the Silver Bear for Best Picture in the 2002 Berlin filmfest.

"Peony" (Aug. 11) is a Chinese film directed by **Yonfan** about the love between female cousins.

"Harmful Insect" (5 p.m., Aug. 11), by Japanese filmmaker **Akihiko Shiota**, is about the failed romance between a beautiful high school students and her Math teacher.

"Whispering Sands" (8 p.m., Aug. 6) is an Indonesian film that tells the poignant story of an overprotective mother and her daughter, and how they cope with the absence of men in their lives. **Nan Triveni Achnas'** movie was awarded the Special Jury Prize at the 2002 Seattle filmfest.

"Seafood" (8 p.m., Aug. 7; 11 p.m., Aug. 10) is about a prostitute and a police officer who both contemplate suicide. The "[illegible]dent" Chinese [illegible] by **Wen Zhu** was secretly filmed with a DVD camera.

"Topless Women Talk About Their Lives" (11 p.m., Aug. 10) is a film within a film about the absurdities of contemporary life. Written and directed by New Zealander **Harry Sinclair**, the film was shot in flats without any special décor, with actors wearing whatever clothes they turned up in, and without rehearsals from scripts written just hours before.

STUART LITTLE 2
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Deadline for submission of entries is on August 13, 2002.
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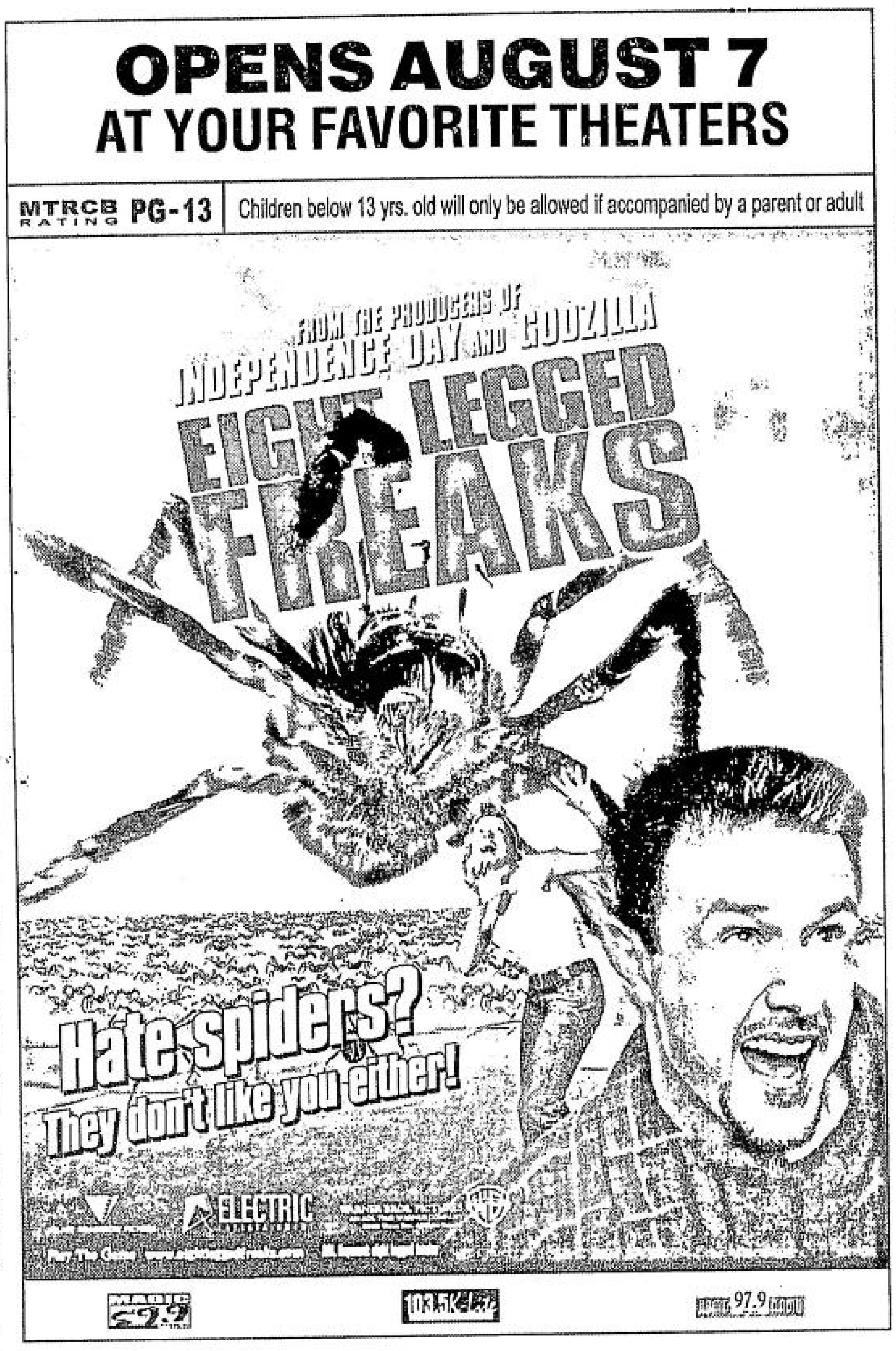
Animal Scene



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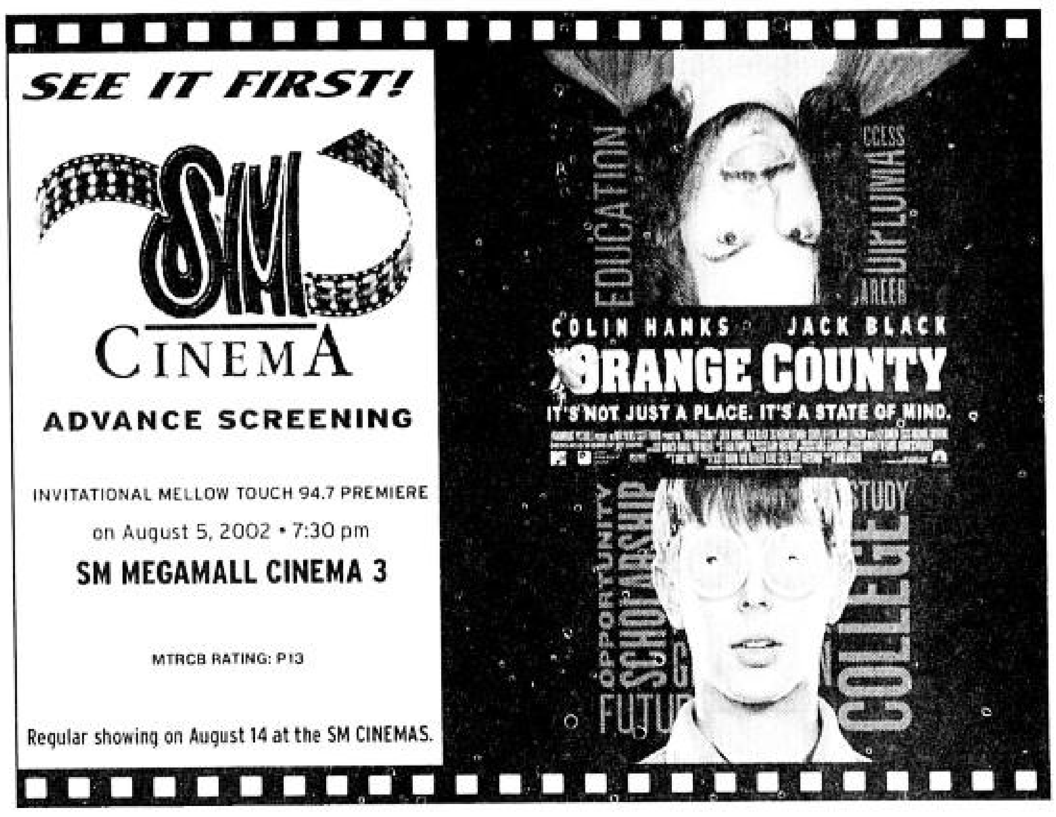

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ORANGE COUNTY
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SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL DWTM PREMIERE
on August 5, 2002 • 7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 1
MTRCB RATING: P13
Regular showing on August 7 at the SM CINEMAS.
Simultaneously shown at SM Cebu • Iloilo • Pampanga • Davao
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WALANG PATAWANG PALALAGPASIN!
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ANGELU DE LEON PATRICIA JAVIER
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Never Umuurong
Always Sumusulong
DIRECTED BY BEN FELEO
VIVA
IPINAGMAMALAKI NILA MANOY AT GAMOL,
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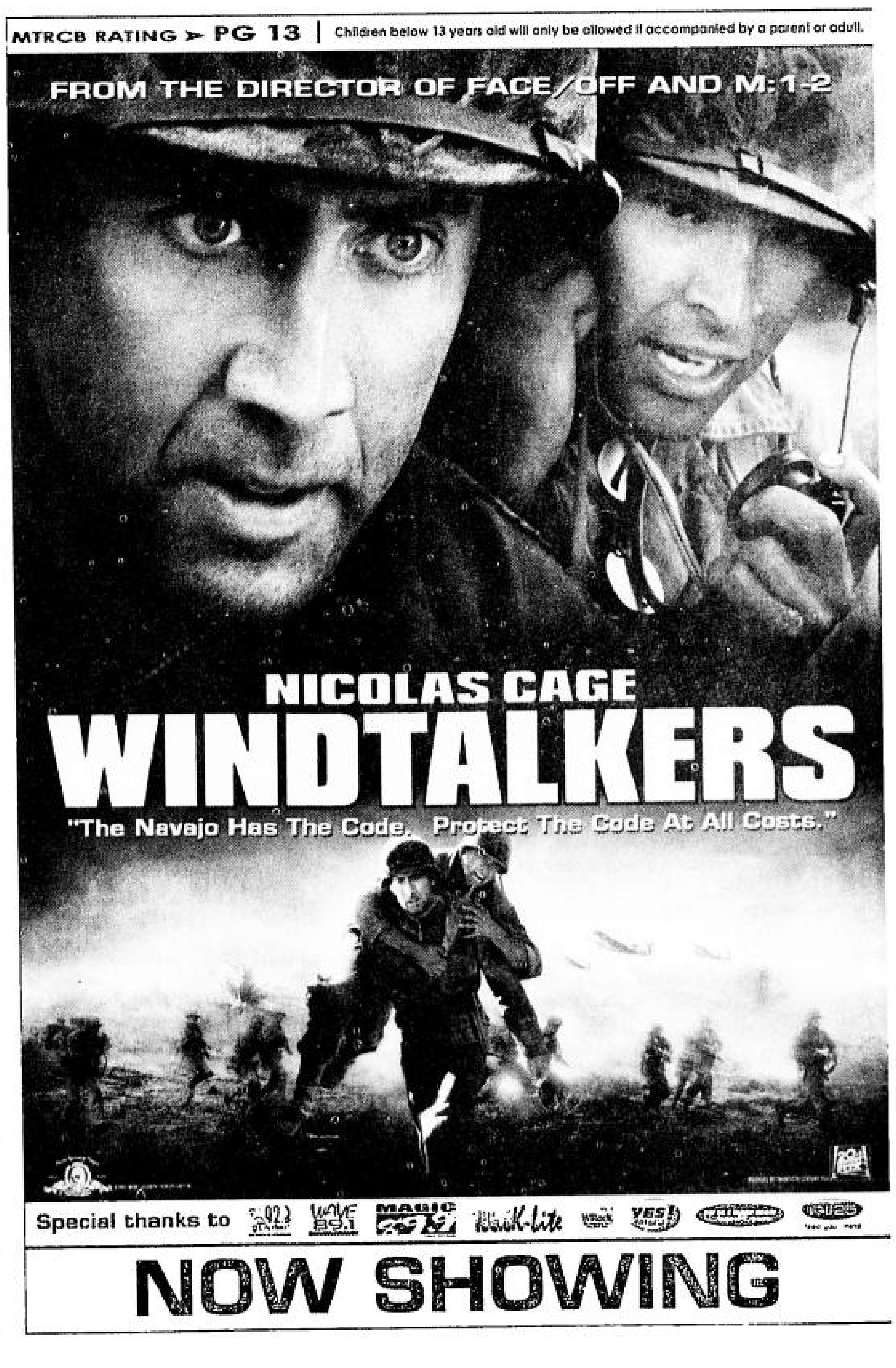

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WINDTALKERS
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NOW SHOWING

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

'Becker,' 'Da Vinci's Inquest' start telecasting today

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

A CORONER, a doctor and a team of human mutants are the lead characters of three new series debuting on the Star World channel in August. Why not sample them and see if they're up your alley?

On Monday, Aug. 5, "Da Vinci's Inquest" starts telecasting at 10 a.m., and will be seen Mondays to Fridays. It stars **Nicholas Campbell** as controversial Vancouver coroner Dominic Da Vinci. The gritty, reality-based series is set in a marginal community where poverty, prostitution and drug abuse run rampant. Da Vinci works with homicide detectives and pathologists to help crack the toughest cases.

Also being launched on Aug. 5, at 7:30 p.m., is "Becker," with **Ted Danson** playing a dedicated, outspoken and talented doctor with a gruff exterior. He may turn off some people, but he is extremely dedicated to his medical practice in the Bronx, where he goes the extra mile to help those in need.

Sample stories: Aug. 5, Becker treats a seven-year-old boy who is HIV positive and decides to use his own money for the boy's medical care. Aug. 12, Becker has a hard time convincing a patient that he's had a heart attack and didn't know it.

Aug. 19, everyone and everything Becker encounters involves sex, so he goes jogging to relieve his sexual tension. Aug. 26, a friend acts strange and lies about the reason why.

Finally, "Mutant X" starts telecasting on Saturday, Aug. 17 at 9 p.m. It chronicles the adventures of a team of human mutants possessing extraordinary powers as a result of genetic engineering. Like hundreds of other unsuspecting subjects, these mutants were altered in secret experiments conducted in a covert government project.

Realizing that things have gotten out of control, the organization that created them is hunting them down in an urgent "product recall." Mutant X's mission is to seek out their fellow mutants to help them come to terms with their astonishing abilities, and protect them from their creators.

The first three episodes: Aug. 17, Adam and his Mutant X team set out to find new mutants before they can be hunted down and exploited for their special powers. Aug. 24, Brennan and Emma join the Mutant X team in fighting off the Genetic Security Agency's forces. Aug. 31, the Mutant X team matches wits with a Russian duo working for the security forces.

Three potential blockbusters

GEORGE Clooney, Ben Affleck and **Hugh Jackman** are separately starring in three potential

'BECKER,'/p. A30

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Shopping and dining with Josh

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

JOSH and I went shopping for sneakers last Saturday.

My son's feet are now so big that he no longer fits into any of the youth sizes. Since he still doesn't fit into the men's collections, our solution was to check out the ladies' sneakers.

We found his current correct size, six-and-a-half, in the women's department. Thank goodness both Adidas and Nike make sneakers that are not at all distinguishable from their male counterparts.

Because Josh's feet are wide, there were several styles that he just couldn't squeeze into. Yonnex makes a cute, foot-friendly, velcro sneaker that we found in Planet Sports. By next year when he's eight years old, I guess we'll be ready for the men's department.

Tony Roma's

Since we were already in Glorietta we ended up having dinner at Tony Roma's. Josh and I are both meat eaters and we loved their original baby back ribs. It was succulent and fall-off-the-bone tender. The extra barbecue sauce had the right amount of zing to it.

I took a chance and had some chicken wings even though my doctor had asked me to try and avoid any fowl for the next few weeks. Luckily, I didn't react. We ordered the Carolina honey wings, and they were sensationally sweet. They went perfectly with the celery sticks and blue cheese dip.

For dessert, Josh and I really loved the freshly baked chocolate chip cookie served on a personal skillet. I asked that the vanilla ice cream with the fudge sauce be served separately and it was a great decision because it felt good to just spoon out the very warm cookie and eat it plain or with a spoonful of ice cream.

All in all, Tony Roma's was a really kid-friendly restaurant that would be a great place for families, especially carnivorous ones like mine, to visit.

Flavour of China

In the Quezon City area, it was bonding time with my "Game KNB" staff over dinner at Flavours of China along Tomas Morato, behind Teriyaki Boy and across from McDonald's.

I've always been consistent with my choices in Chinese restaurants. If their Yang Chow fried rice is not oily, has generous chunks of meat, vegetables and egg, and if their sweet and sour pork has a tangy sauce, is crispy on the outside and has just the right tender meat, then I will keep coming back.

Flavours of China did not disappoint. In fact, the food was generously portioned, at wallet-friendly prices. The ambience was great because they adopted a modern, Zen-like but colorful decor.

I must make special mention of their delicious *buko-pandan* salad for dessert. Okay, I know that this isn't a Chinese dessert. But normally, after having so much to eat—and this happens remarkably often when you eat in a Chinese restaurant—it feels good to end the meal with something cool and cleansing to the palate. The *buko-pandan* was creamy but not cloying. It was sweet, but still within the bounds of our weird requirement for a yummy dessert because it wasn't too sweet.

Dencio's

For Josh and I to be able to have dinner together from Tuesday until Friday as well as Sundays, he has to come over to ABS-CBN. How I wish we had a more normal home life, but the hours I spend taping in the studio are part and parcel of my chosen career. In a way, I'm glad that Josh loves being in the studio and that he grew up exposed to this life so he now treats it as part of his routine.

He has a remarkable appetite and, luckily, he's really getting a kick out of eating from the varied spreads prepared for us.

During my latest "Morning Girls" taping, Dencio's was the bar host. Josh went back four times for the beef *caldereta*. The way he was savoring each bite really whetted my appetite so I had to forego having just fruits for dinner that night.

Josh really knows his food. The *caldereta* sauce was so savory that it would have been a meal in itself just over rice. But the bonus was that the meat was chewy and tender. I can't deny that I did go back for seconds as well.

GMA to grace benefit concert

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will be the special guest in the benefit concert, "Sa Mahal Kong Bayan," to confer Special Recognition Awards to today's new heroes—nurse Ediborah Yap, missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham—7:30 p.m. on Aug. 6 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave. corner Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City.

Education Secretary Raul Roco will also be on hand to present a special award to model public servant of the year, Marilyn Bien-Bongiad, a public school teacher from Naga, Camarines Sur.

Four world-class Filipino artists—soprano Andion Fernandez, tenor Nolyn Cabahug, bass-baritone Nomer Son, and pianist-accompanist Lourdes Gregorio—will treat music lovers to a night of enchanting music.

The special concert is a benefit for Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan, with president Jovito Salonga.

"Sa Mahal Kong Bayan" will highlight opera excerpts, light classics, Broadway hits and inspiring Filipino compositions and kundiman.

Proceeds of the concert will become part of the Kilosbayan-Bantay Katarungan endowment fund for the "Justice Watch" program.

For details, call 534-5868 or 534-5889.

POWER-PACKED LINE-UP. (clockwise) soprano Andion Fernandez, pianist Lourdes Gregorio, tenor Nolyn Cabahug and bass-baritone Nomer Son are the featured performers in "Sa Mahal Kong Bayan."

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WINDTALKERS - PG 13 1:00, 3:40, 5:20, 9:00	**SORORITY BOYS - R 18** 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	**WINDTALKERS - PG 13** 11:40, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10;10

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	PAKISABI NA LANG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	WIND TALKERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	STUART LITTLE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	MEN IN BLACK 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	MEGIDDO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	SORORITY BOYS
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	WINDTALKERS
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	DISKARTE / FRUIT SWELLING
ODEON	WINDTALKERS
ODEON-2	RUSH HOUR / PRO
ROBEN	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	RESIDENT EVIL / RIFFER
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
REMAR	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
REMAR-2	WINDTALKERS
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WINDTALKERS
CINEMA-2	STUART LITTLE 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DOG SOLDIER
CINEMA-2	GAWIN SA DILIM
CINEMA-3	MEN IN BLACK 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WINDTALKERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MEGIDDO
CINEMA-6	HIYAS SA PARAISO
CINEMA-7	SELDA
CINEMA-8	SORORITY BOYS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WINDTALKERS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WINDTALKERS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STUART LITTLE 2
CINEMA-12	STUART LITTLE 2
CINEMA-14	PAKISABI NA LANG
CINEMA-15	ANG GALING GALING MO BABES
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	MEN IN BLACK 2
CINEMA-2	STUART LITTLE 2
CINEMA-3	STUART LITTLE 2
CINEMA-4	WINDTALKERS
CINEMA-5	SORORITY BOYS
CINEMA-6	WINDTALKERS
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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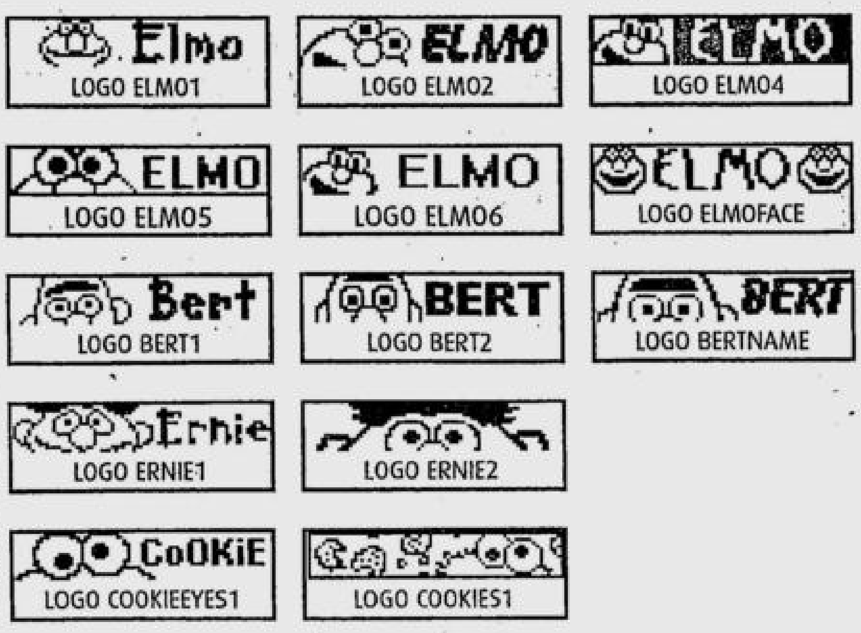
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Bert
LOGO BERT1
BERT
LOGO BERT2
BERT
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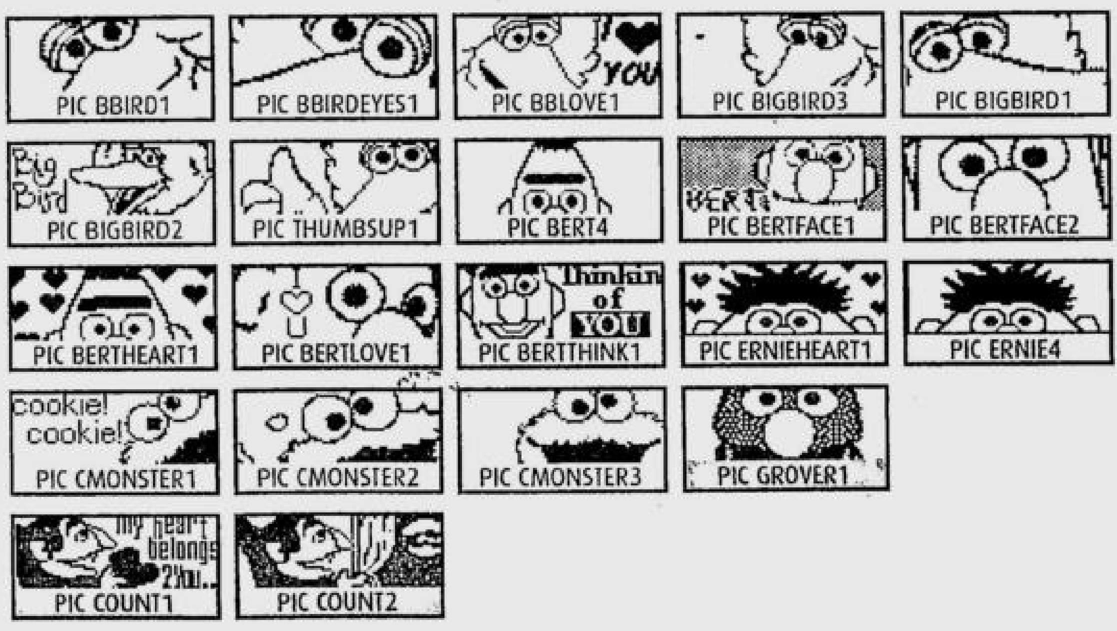
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PIC BBIRDEYES1
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PIC BBLOVE1
PIC BIGBIRD3
PIC BIGBIRD1
Big Bird
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PIC BERT4
BERT
PIC BERTFACE1
PIC BERTFACE2
PIC BERTHEART1
PIC BERTLOVE1
Thinkin of YOU
PIC BERTTHINK1
PIC ERNIEHEART1
PIC ERNIE4
cookie! cookie!
PIC CMONSTER1
PIC CMONSTER2
PIC CMONSTER3
PIC GROVER1
my heart belongs 2'You..
PIC COUNT1
PIC COUNT2

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Big Bird's Lullaby	**TONE BBLULLABY**	I Love Trash	**TONE ILOVETRASH**
Bubble On My Snuffle	**TONE BUBBLEON**	If Moon Was Cookie	**TONE COOKYMOON**
C Is For Cookie	**TONE C4COOKIE**	Ladybug's Picnic	**TONE LADYBUG**
Captain Vegetable	**TONE CAPTVEG**	Lost Me Cookie At The Disco	**TONE LOSTCOOKY**
Comb Your Face	**TONE COMBURFACE**	One Of These Things Is Not Like The Other	**TONE 1OFTHESE**
Cookie's Disco	**TONE COOKYDISCO**	Rubber Duckie	**TONE RUBBERDUCKY**
Dance Myself To Sleep	**TONE DANCESLEEP**	Run	**TONE RUN**
Elmo's Song	**TONE ELMOSONG**	Sing	**TONE SING**
Everybody Wash	**TONE EBODYWASH**	Somebody Come And Play	**TONE COMENPLAY**
Fixin' My Hair	**TONE MYHAIR**	Splish Splash	**TONE SPLISH**
Fuzzy And Blue	**TONE FUZYNBLUE**	Sunny Day	**TONE SUNNYDAY**
Grouch Anthem	**TONE GROUCH**	Take Care Of That Smile	**TONE THATSMILE**
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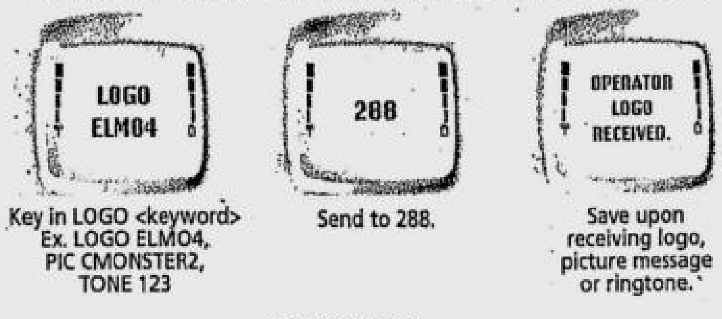
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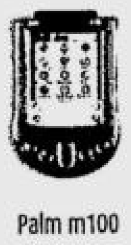
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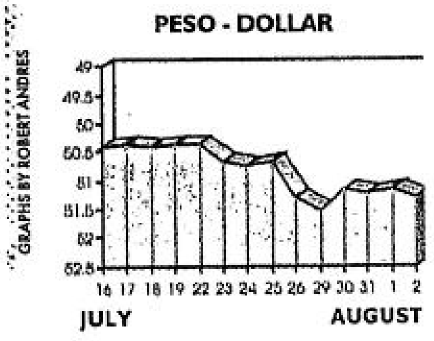

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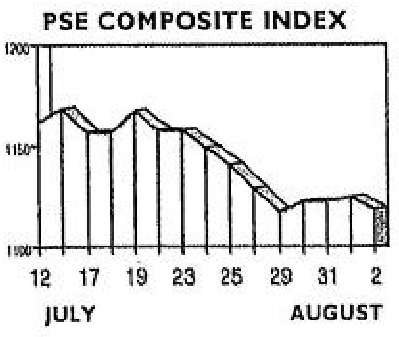
STOCK MARKET

Market seen moving sideways

ANOTHER week of cautious trading awaits the local stock market due to concerns arising from unfavorable economic data released by the United States as well as the Philippine government's widening budget deficit.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index dipped by

MARKET/B6



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Mitsubishi to make RP its regional AUV hub

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MITSUBISHI Motors of Japan is planning to make the Philippines its production hub for Asian utility vehicles in Southeast Asia within the next two to three years. This forms part of the Japanese automotive giant's plan to rationalize its operations in the region's free trade block, which is set to start next year.

Mitsubishi Motors of the Philippines senior vice president Melchor R. Dizon told the INQUIRER that the company's headquarters in Japan was extremely keen on using the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) to expand sales of the AUV models in the region with the Philippines as a base.

Mitsubishi's AUV models are currently assembled and sold in the Philippines and Indonesia, and the Japanese automotive giant was interested in selling AUVs in other Asean countries, particularly Vietnam. Dizon said Mitsubishi believed there was an appetite for affordable and flexible-use vehicles in other Asean countries that could be filled by AUVs.

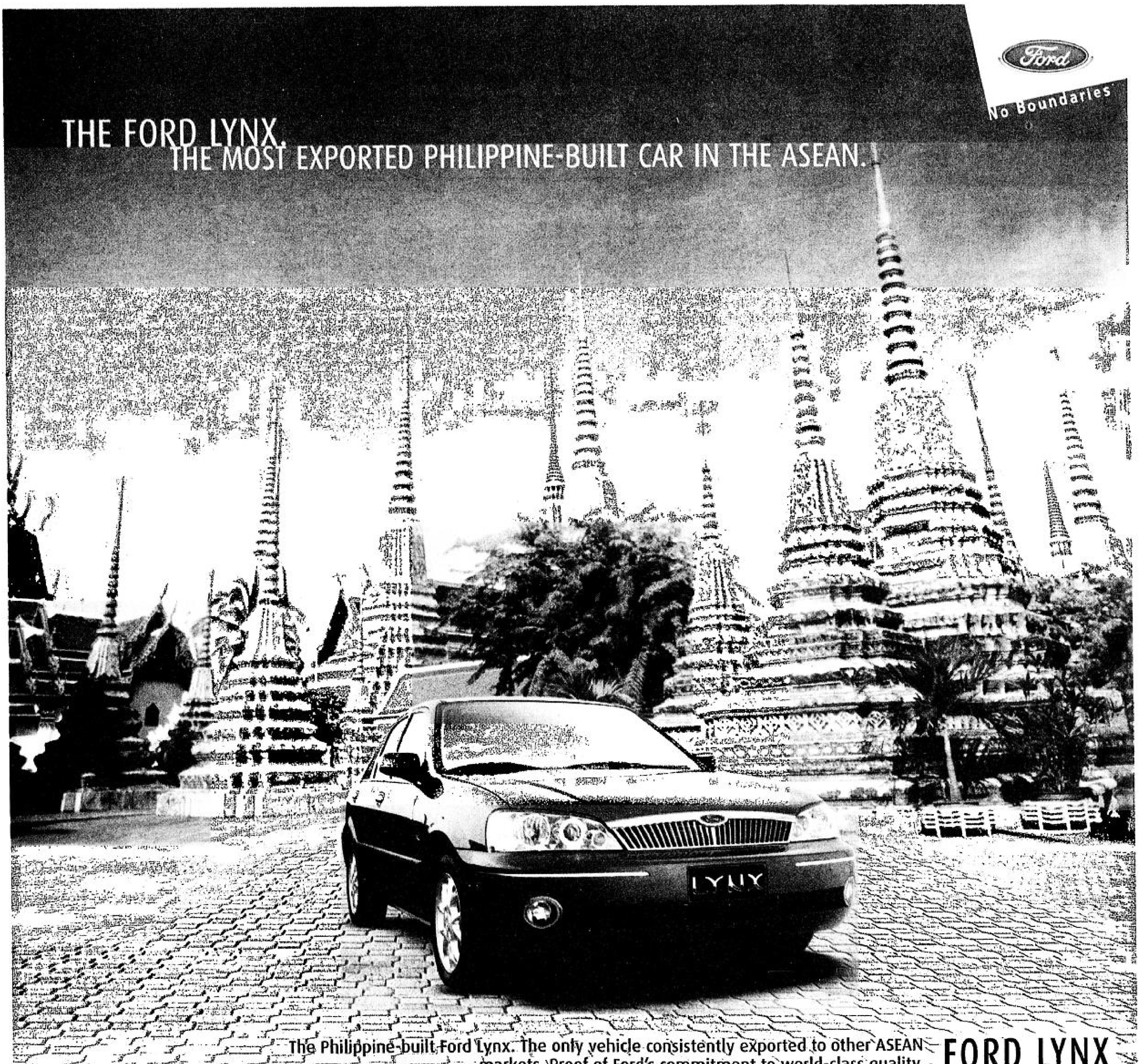
Based on initial discussions, Dizon said Mitsubishi was likely to consolidate its regional production of AUVs in its Philippine plant, which has a total production capacity (including pickup trucks and sedans) of 62,500 units yearly.

Mitsubishi is currently the country's No. 2 assembler with a 22-percent market share last year. Its Adventure model is the second best-selling AUV.

Dizon said the consolidation of Mitsubishi's AUV production would allow the Philippine unit to use its idle capacity and achieve economies of scale through the production of roughly 2,000 units a month with only a third going to the domestic market. It currently churns out between 600 and 700 units of Adventure per month.

Under Afta, Mitsubishi could ship out its AUV models to any Asean country at sharply reduced tariffs of no more than 5 percent

MITSUBISHI/B6



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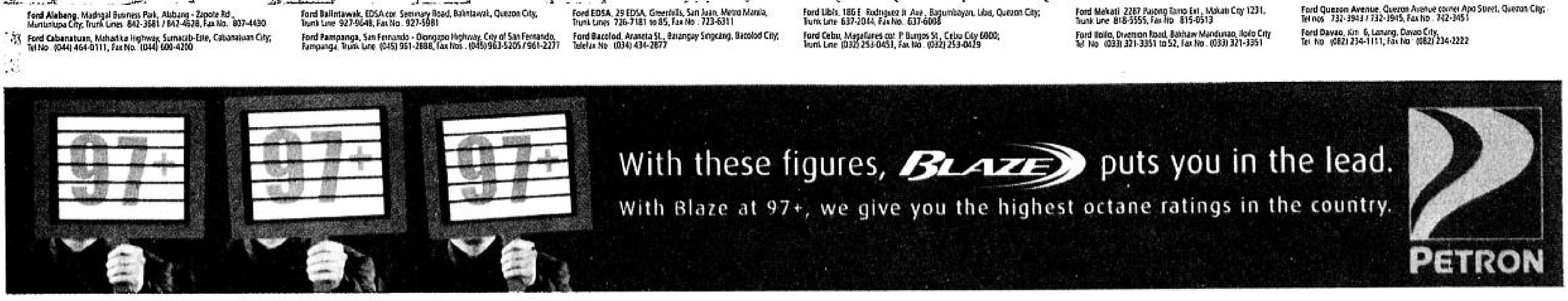

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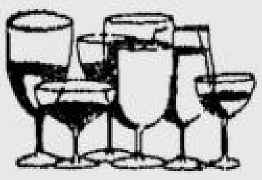

Victor C. Agustin

SEN. Robert Jaworski may have cleared his PNB debts but the ex-basketball player is still freezing the ball as far as his liabilities with the Opus Dei faithful are concerned.

Jaworski's company, First Legend Philippines Inc., still owes over P36 million to the bankrupt Opus Dei-run investment bank, Corporate Investments Philippines Inc.

First Legend was a rubbing alcohol manufacturing firm organized by Jaworski, chair/president, and Opus Dei supernumerary Vicente Atilano, treasurer, in January 1993 with a paid-up capital of P1.25 million.

The following year, CIPI started granting loans to the Jaworski firm, which totaled P12.2 million up to March 2000.

Despite the senator's bigger debt problem with the Philippine National Bank, the Jaworski firm was able to service the loans with CIPI up to May 2000.

The following month, CIPI told its depositors, mainly Opus Dei faithful and Catholic schools that lent money to Jaworski-like borrowers through CIPI, that it could no longer service their multimillion-peso placements.

Another Jaworski firm, Double Shield Shipyard Corp., borrowed a total of P86 million from CIPI in October 1999, despite its being incorporated in July 1997 with a paid-up capital of only P1 million.

When Jaworski settled two years later, Double Shield paid only P75 million to extinguish the liability.

In other words, not only did the senator evade paying interest on the loan, but he also managed to shave off P12 million from the principal.

Being a member of the Senate, after all, has its perks.

Azcuna's alibi

EX-PCGG chief Adolfo Azcuna is set to be interviewed tomorrow by the Judicial and Bar Council for his candidacy to the Supreme Court.

Fearing that the previous columns about the ex-Aquino legal counsel could negatively impact on Azcuna's chances, Azcuna's law firm sent an explanation to the points raised by ex-PCGG Chair Jovito Salonga and ex-Justice Secretary Sedfrey Ordonez.

On his being the dummy of Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, Azcuna claimed that he merely served in 1983 as one of the incorporators of a shell company that eventually was used by Kokoy to acquire PCIBank shares of the Lopezes for a song.

Azcuna, then a partner of the Bengzon Law Office, only came to know his still being listed as chair/president of the Kokoy firm in March 1986, shortly after Edsa I, when the Marcos crony firms were being sequestered.

"Former PCGG Chair Ramon Diaz, a known ally of Sen. Salonga, investigated the case and cleared Atty. Azcuna of any wrongdoing," the Azcuna Arroyo Chua & Caedo Law Offices said in a statement.

The Azcuna explanation on his role in the Bulletin is even more interesting, a classic case of lawyers erecting corporate veils to mask their clients. Here is the unedited reply:

"As counsel for the Bulletin, Atty. Azcuna rendered a legal opinion dated November 22, 1995 stating that 'there are no suits or proceedings which will in any manner affect your integrity or solvency.' This is rightly so because the case before the Sandiganbayan (Civil Case No. 0022) does not involve the Bulletin. It was, in fact, never a party to the case.

[Cocktales: Bulletin not a party to the case? Yet, in the following sentences, Azcuna law firm reverses itself.]

"Said case involves mainly the proceeds from the sale of Bulletin shares that were bought back by Bulletin through its right of preemption. This right of preemption is shown on the stock certificate itself.

"The purchases made by the Bulletin based on this right of preemption were sustained by the Supreme Court in its ruling in the case of Bulletin vs. PCGG, GR No. 79126, dated April 15, 1988. It is the proceeds from the payments made by the Bulletin that stand to be forfeited, and were in fact ordered forfeited, to the Government in a March 14, 2002 decision of the Sandiganbayan.

"The legal opinion of Atty. Azcuna is correct and is, in fact, supported by the decisions of the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan."

Cocktales: When Azcuna gave the legal opinion about "there are no suits or proceedings," he identified himself before the authorities as an "independent legal counsel."

Now, as can be gleaned in his statement, Azcuna changed his tune and that, gee, he was indeed, as he still is, counsel not only for Bulletin but also for Don Emilio Yap.

Heard through the grapevine

TRANSPORT Undersecretary Wilfredo Trinidad, a career executive, has been sidelined in favor of Jose Cortes Jr., president of Pacific Cement Corp.

And another undersec, Agustin Bengzon, was supposed to have also joined Trinidad in retirement but at the last minute was retained with a new title, Undersecretary for Special Projects. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

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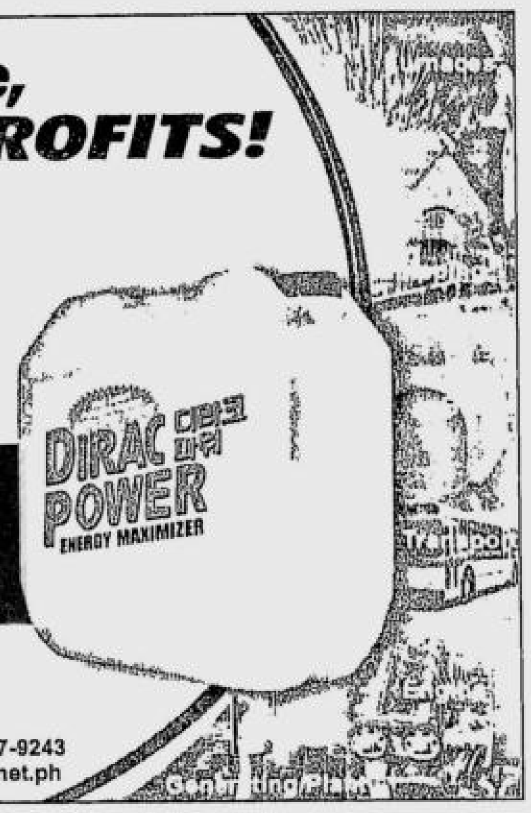

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(Time-out for Questions and Answers)

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Another valid question: ***"But won't asphalt shingles melt and warp in our hot summer?"***

Answer: The USA is a cold country in the north but a very hot desert country in the south (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona) beating our climate with their 38°C to 41°C summer day temperature.

Then, this question: ***"But why do we hear so much about shingles' poor perfomance in our weather?"***

Answer: Because of the fear of the unknown. Because the workmanship of poorly-trained installers negate the superior value of shingles. Because asphalt shingles are not distinguished from wood shingles which warp and leak. Because giant G.I. roof sheet manufacturers can't bear the idea of losing.

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SEC extends conversion deadline

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has extended to May next year the November deadline for lending investors organized as partnerships or single proprietorships to convert into corporations.

The justice department earlier ruled that in line with the Financing Company Act of 1998, lending investors without quasi-banking functions were under the regulation of the SEC.

However, single proprietorships and partnerships registered with the Department of Trade Industry do not fall under SEC's jurisdiction. Thus, through a circular they were required to convert into corporations and register with the SEC by Nov. 2 this year.

The deadline was, however, extended upon the request of various associations of lending investors and financial institutions.

The SEC also decided to require new lending investors to register as financing companies subject to the commission's capitalization and reportorial requirements.

Under the rules of the SEC, financing companies operating within Metro Manila must have a capital base of P10 million; P5 million in other cities and P2.5 million for those located in municipalities.

The regulatory agency has received information about some of these lenders' "unchecked activities." Several lending investors, according to SEC Chair Lilia Bautista, have violated their corporate charters and the country's securities laws by borrowing from more than 19 lenders in order to fund its lending operations.

The SEC, together with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, plans to push for a new law that will transfer the regulation of lending investors to local government units and/or to the trade and industry department.

An amendment last year to the General Banking Act transferred from the BSP its jurisdiction over lending investors to the SEC.

Thousands of lending investors have yet to comply with the SEC's new capital requirements.

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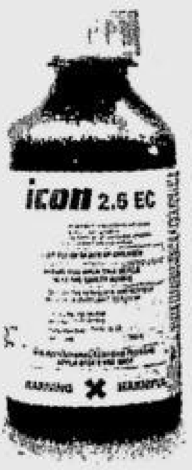
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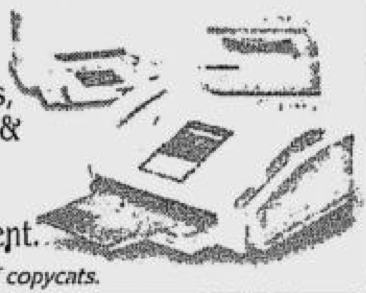
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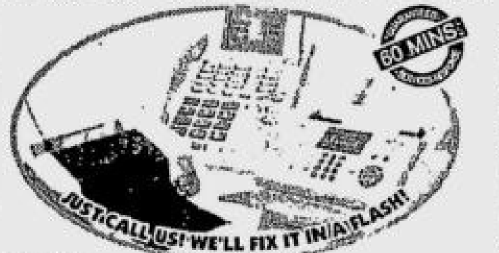
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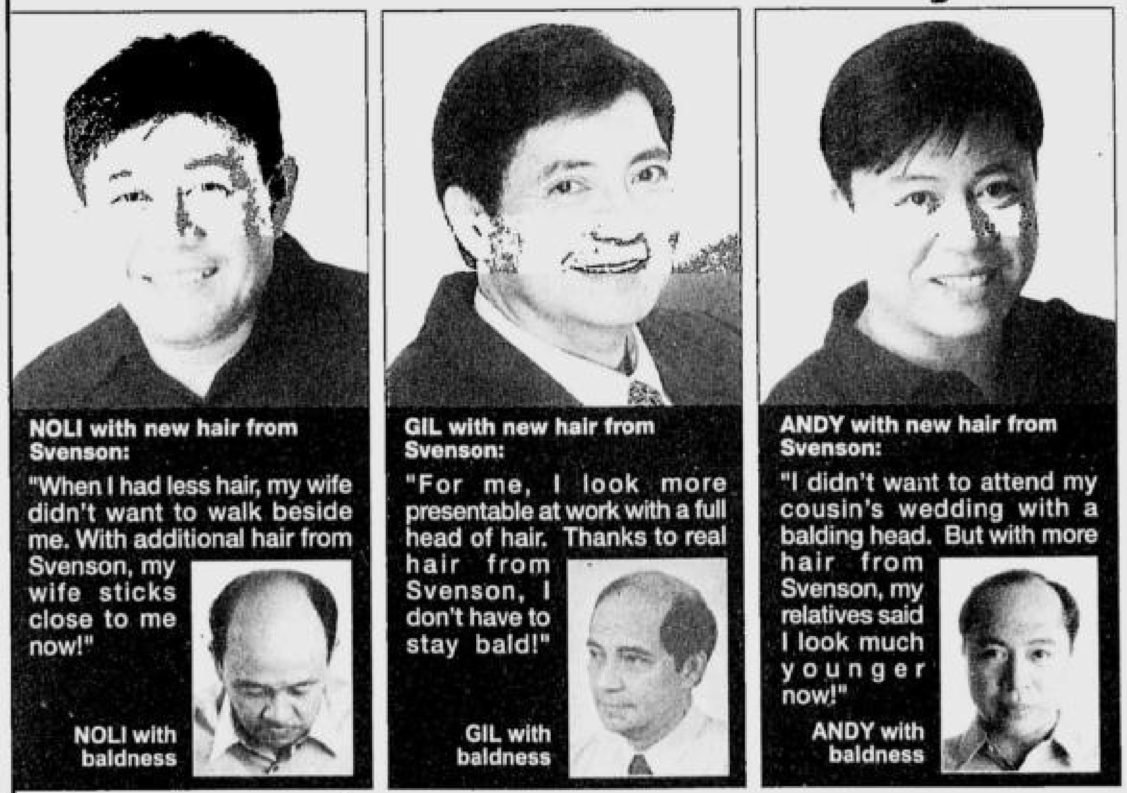
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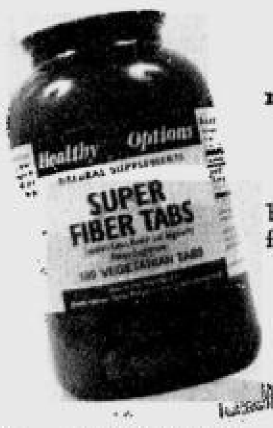
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QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

IF I have said it once, I have said it a million times: Politicians are, oh, so generous—with money that is not theirs. There are two bills in Congress that will give SSS members' money away.

Bills Nos. 4817 and 4818 seek to condone the penalties on employers who are delinquent in their Social Security System (SSS) contributions. If a delinquent employer updates his account within the proposed prescribed period, all interest charges will be erased from the books of the SSS.

Membership in the SSS is compulsory, on the employee from the day of employment and on the employer from the day he opens for business. The employer is required to collect monthly from his employee 3.36 percent of his salary, add employer's counterpart of 5.04 percent and then remit the following month the entire 8.4 percent to the SSS. If the employer does not remit the contributions within the following month, he is delinquent. The penalty is stiff: 3 percent monthly. Worse, what the employer owes SSS is considered a tax liability punishable under the internal revenue code.

The congressmen's generosity stems from their desire to persuade delinquent employers to update their accounts. It won't work. On the contrary, condoning the interest actually encourages delinquency.

There have been two condonation programs before. The first was in 1987, the second in 1997. Far from cutting down delinquency, condonation actually increased it. In 1997, there were 237,702 employers with a total delinquency plus penalties of P8.9 billion. This proposed 2002 condonation program will cover some 246,000 employers with total delinquency plus penalties of P8.0 billion. Although there was a slight drop in the amount, there was an increase of 8,298 in the number of employers from the 1997 level.

Indeed, why should a delinquent employer update his account under these proposed bills? He can hold on to his money, including his employees' cash, sit tight for another five years and some kind-hearted, but misguided, congressman will file another condonation bill. This can go on forever and ever. In the process, what will happen to the poor employees who have been defrauded of their hard-earned money?

Also, the condonation formula results in poor collection efficiency. In 1997, only 17,630 delinquent employers, or 7.4 percent of total, took up the offer. The SSS collected P859 million. But it condoned P464.4 in penalties. Not counting overhead, the penalties condoned were 54 percent of the collection. Any field collector will tell you this is a very expensive way of collecting debts.

Above everything else, the bill rewards delinquent employers for their fraudulent acts and punishes their employees, the poor victims, as they are deprived of their SSS benefits. Also, the bills will deprive members of the interest charges.

If Congress really wants to help wipe out delinquencies, it should look into the collection machinery of the SSS. Of the current number of 246,000 delinquent employers, cases have already been filed against 4,314 (1.75 percent of total) employers with delinquencies of P1.3 billion. Charges against 4,692 (1.91 percent of total) employers, with delinquency of P433.7 million, are now being prepared. Then, 2,436 (0.10 percent of total) employers with delinquencies of P479 million have submitted various settlement proposals. The rest, 234,556 in all, (95.3 of total) are in various stages of investigation. At this snail's pace, delinquent employers will never be wiped out. Perhaps, Congress can help SSS find a way to speed up the pursuit of delinquent employers.

But, condonation is not the way to take, especially since it has been proven ineffective in the past. The best way to wipe out delinquencies is to enforce the law, not to suspend it.

Most importantly, SSS members own the penalties proposed to be condoned. Congress cannot condone what it does not own.

The Philippine Association of Retired Persons Inc. (PARP), the largest organized group of retirees, has filed its strong opposition to the bills. If you are an SSS member, active or retired, please take a pen and paper right away and rush a letter to your congressman to vote down these bills.

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Gov't debt up 15.2% in May

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT'S outstanding debt rose by 15.2 percent in May to P2.580 trillion from P2.240 trillion a year ago.

Data from the Bureau of Treasury showed that on a month-on-month basis, the government's debt stock grew by only 2.7 percent from P2.545 trillion in April.

The amount does not include yet the national government's P486.24 billion in contingent debts or borrowings of the private sector or state-owned agencies assumed by the government.

The government used a foreign exchange average of P49.9 to a dollar in computing its obligations in May compared with an average of P50.65 to $1 in the previous month and P50.6 to $1 a year ago.

Of the total government debt as of May, borrowings from the local market went up by 17.7 percent to P1.352 trillion from P1.149 trillion a year ago and by 2.7 percent from P1.352 trillion the previous month.

The increase was, however, offset by the recovery of the peso in May that reduced the peso equivalent of the foreign borrowings.

Despite a slight increase in interest rates, as indicated by a 27-basis-point hike in the benchmark 91-day treasury bill yield in May to 4.569 percent from a historic low of 4.299 percent in late April, the government felt the domestic market still offered a reasonable lending rate.

Foreign loans went up by 12.6 percent in May to P1.228 trillion in peso equivalent from P1.091 trillion a year ago. The amount was, however, lower by 0.1 percent than the P1.229 trillion in the previous month.

Government foreign borrowings in May were negligible but in the following month, it went back to the global bond market for to float $300 million worth of seven-year bonds. This and the recent issuance of a P62.9 billion worth of three- and five-year treasury bonds in June are expected to trigger an increase in the debt stock during the month.

The debt stock released by the national government included only the state's local and foreign borrowings and not the external liabilities of the private sector.

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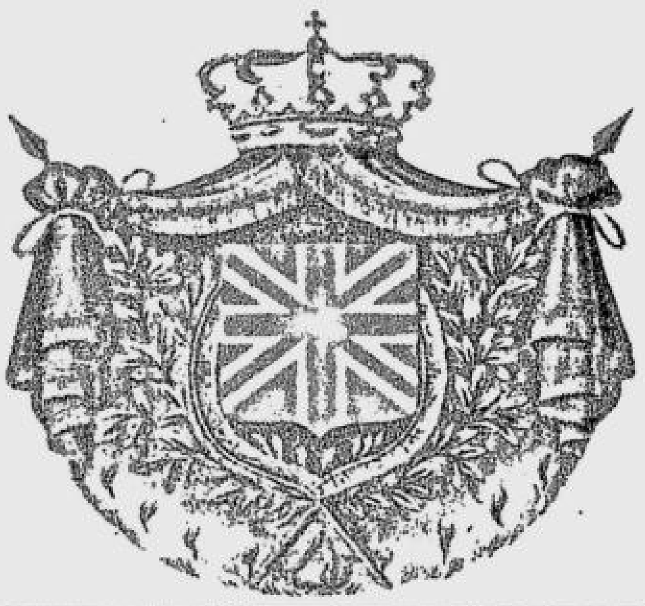

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

DAY ❶ *August 8, 2002*

Keynote: Revolutionizing Retail
Mr. Bienvenido V. Tantoco III
EVP/GM, Shopwise

Keynote: Economic Outlook for the Phil Retail Industry
DTI Secretary Manuel A. Roxas

The State of the Philippine Retailing Industry
Mr. Roberto S. Claudio - PRA Director

e-Business: Creating Interconnected Companies
Mr. Joey Gurango
Managing Dir., Microsoft Business Solutions

Finding Your Niche Market
Ms. Gigi Tibi
Marketing Communications Dir., Penshoppe

Luncheon Presentation: Motivation Asia

Retail Marketing Trends and Design: What's in, What's out
Mr. Scott Kohno - President
Mr. Keith Yamasaki - Managing Partner
The Retail Elements (USA)

Planning for the Right Merchandise Mix
Mr. David Boden
Retail Industry Lead, Deloitte Consulting (Singapore)

In-Store Promotion and Marketing
Ms. Jing Vilacorta
VP-Planning, Ace Saatchi & Saatchi

State of the Fashion Industry of the World
Mr. Sergio Beero
Director, Instituto Europeo Di Design (Milan, Italy)

DAY ❷ *August 9, 2002*

Insights to Retailing and Consumers in the Philippines & Asia
Mr. Daniel Melone
GM, Euromonitor Asia Pacific (Singapore)

Prospects of M-Commerce in Retailing
Mr. Anastacio Martinez
Head, Personal Communications and Mobile Services Division, Smart Communications, Inc.

Retail Technology Trends: Using Datamining for Retail Productivity
Ms. Dina Salonga
Marketing Director, SQL Wizard

Loss Prevention…Can You Afford Not To Invest?
Mr. TJ Schoenlein
Dir., Loss Prevention Operations
Big C Supercenters (Thailand)

Luncheon Presentation: PLDT Business Solutions

Life's Winning Points: Inspirational Break From Work, Business & Life
Mr. Francis Kong
General Manager, Co. B
President, Business Matters Values Foundation5

Forum on Retailing Issues and Concerns:
- Business Taxes
  Panel of Speakers/Reactors:
  - Atty. Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, Chato-Eleazar Law Office
  - Dir. Teresita Mistal, Department of Interior and Local Govt.

Creative Ways to Helping Employees in Economically Difficult Times
Mr. Donald Dee, President
Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)

Translating Consumer Insight into Winning Retail Strategies
Mr. Greg Banzon
Managing Dir., Johnson & Johnson (Indonesia)

Most Retail Friendly LGU: Why Should You Do Business In Our City
Mayor Marides Fernando - City of Marikina

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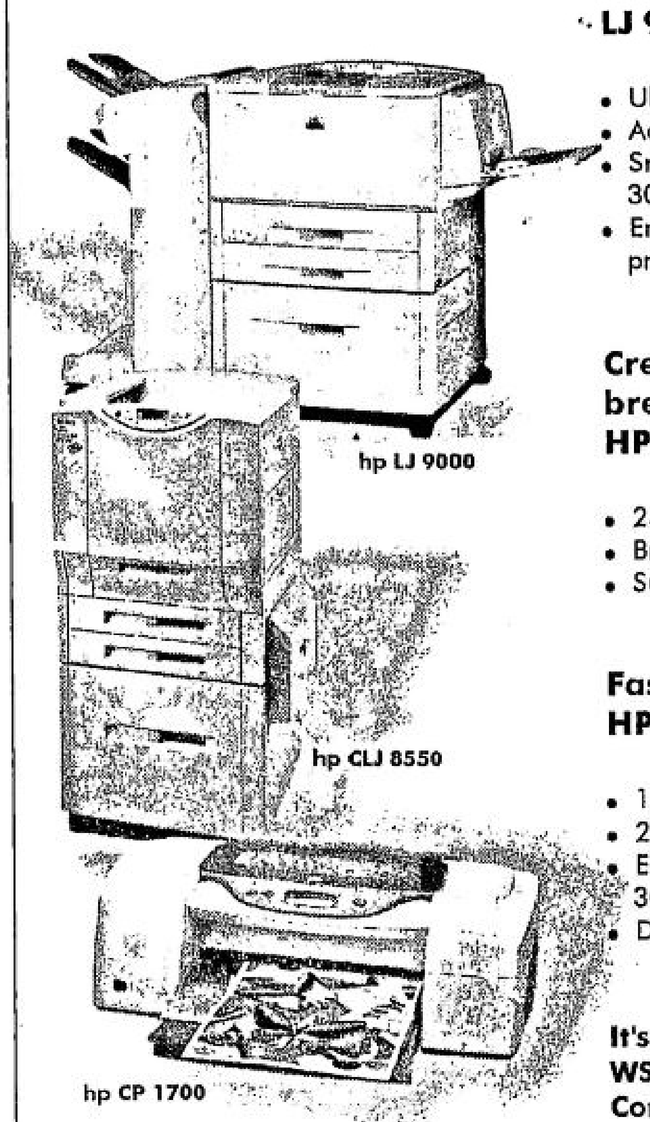

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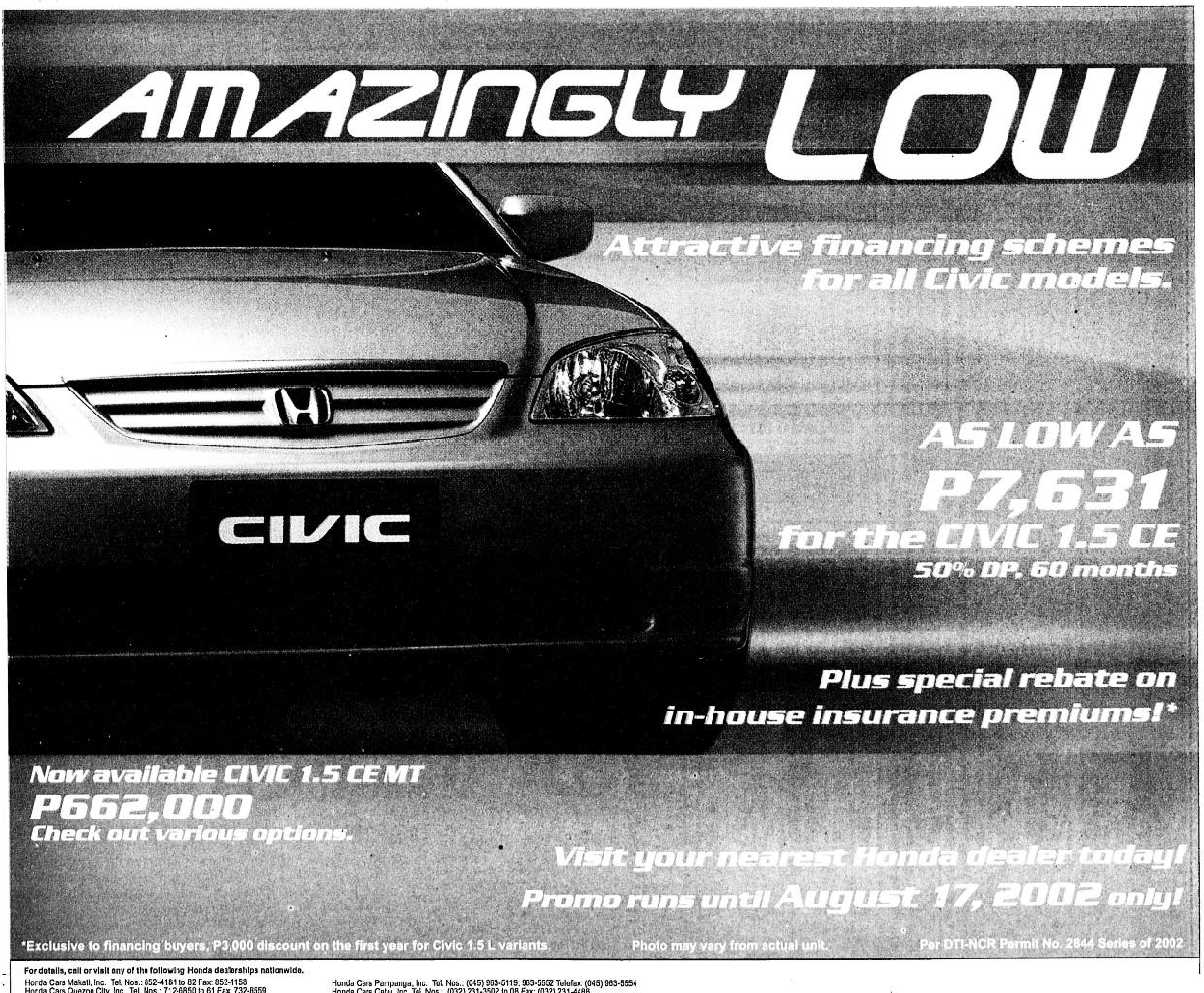
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A 'FLI' trap

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I WENT to the hospital for my semi-annual checkup, and there was a corresponding check, up in the accounting department. I have been feeling exceptionally well in the past six months so I was totally unprepared for the result, which was not good. Over the weekend, instead of my usual jovial self, I was decidedly dejected. I still feel fine but tense, and await the next checkup in January with trepidation.

So, instead of cracking numerous puns, since I don't feel in the mood, I will print part of a poem I wrote years ago, just after the Gulf War. A journalist friend of mine loved it so much that he telexed it to the United States, Canada and six European countries, and they all published it. It is in limerick form and was composed in about 15 minutes:

There was a bad man from Iraq
Whose neighbors he liked to attack.
He just reduced Persia
To a state of inertia
And knows that they cannot fight back.

He annexed Kuwait in a day
With Saudi, a stone's throw away.
The United Nations
Cried man battle stations
And off went the US of A.

It took a few days for the Yanks
To freeze all the Iraqi banks.
The American forces
Have massive resources
Of fighters and bombers and tanks.

In Jordan and also in Syria
The troops grow wearier and wearier.
He's threatened the masses
With poisonous gases.
They're all in a state of hysteria.

The Israeli have got it all planned
The matter is now well in hand.
A statement from Haifa
Said they would die for
The chance to get ARABLE land.

The Czech air force just announced
That all Saddam's troops will get trounced.
When they jumped from their 'plane
And hit the terrain,
Regrettably, all the Czechs bounced.

The value of gold just increases
The dollar is falling to pieces.
The war of the world
Is now being unfurled
And no one can save us 'cept Jesus.

* * *

Incidentally, if anybody is going to Egypt, do not take credit cards. It is strictly cash on the Nile, and do not refer to the inhabitants as nylons. It is as bad as calling a resident of Paris, a parasite. The French minister of environment is having the Tour de France recycled. At my suggestion, Wimbledon.com is changing its domain to Wimbledon.net. Lastly, two members of the PSE have resigned over trading hours. I don't know the facts but perhaps they wanted to support my motion to open only on Wednesdays.

As I predicted two weeks ago, volatility on Wall Street has become more sedate. No more 6-percent movements in one day, now the markets move more quietly. Sales of DRAMAMINE and PROZAC have plummeted and this is probably the reason for the weakness in the pharmaceutical sector. Investors are now looking at companies with strong cash positions and dumping those with large amounts of debt. If there is going to be a battle for survival, cash is king. News that two directors of WORLDCOM have been arrested will help restore investor confidence. The latest news that the US economy only grew by 1.1 percent in the second quarter sent both indices down about 3 percent. A double dip is possible but I have faith in Alan Greenspan to keep the economy growing, even at a modest pace.

Our market scarcely moves on a daily basis, but it has recovered 30 points and made a double bottom at 1,110. All eyes are on TEL but this could drag on and on. The first half profits were substantially better than analysts expected, but 90 percent came from SMART, which may have reached its zenith. If Mr. Gokongwei gives up, which seems unlikely, TEL shares will surely rise.

Last week FLI broke a major support level, and I indicated to subscribers that this might be a FLI trap. A week later, the SEC announced an investigation into FLI and FDC for alleged insider trading and both shares have fallen sharply. It is interesting to note that the 85-percent stock dividend announced by FLI ages ago, has still not been approved.

My mystery BUY, available only to subscribers, is well up but there is more to come. This is not a market where you can easily make profits and you have to work hard to make even 5 percent in this environment.

As always, I am available at *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*, but please stop sending me empty e-mails, or those with attachments from unknown sources, since I simply delete them.

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CANLUBANG GC	570,000	CELEBRITY CLUB	170,000
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Baguio Country Club	-	680,000
Camp John Hay	290,000	250,000
Capitol Hills Golf & CC A/B*	110,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	190,000	-
Canlubang Golf	550,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club	100,000	-
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Eastridge	200,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	-
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Fontana D/C	70,000/140,000	Pls. Call
Forest Hills "A"/C*	230,000	230,000*
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*	Pls. Call*	11,000,000
Manila Polo	-	2,700,000
Makati Sports Club A/B	Pls. Call	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	650,000/720,000*	700,000*
Metropolitan Club	100,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind./C3*	140,000	265,000*
Mt. Malarayat	350,000	-
Orchard Golf	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Phil. Columbian	65,000	-
Puerto Azul "A"/"B"	120,000/150,000*	80,000*
Punta Fuego	550,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	220,000	200,000
Riviera Golf "A"/"C"*	180,000/450,000*	280,000*
Riviera Golf "B"	250,000	-
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	90,000/Pls. Call**	-
Sherwoods "A"/"B"/"C"**	105,000/Pls. Call*	-
Sta. Elena Golf "A"	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Subic Bay Yacht Club/Corp*	330,000	-
Subic Golf	180,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	-	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	900,000	810,000
Tagaytay Midlands	830,000	700,000
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Canlubang	-	600,000
Canyonwoods	Please Call	200,000
Capitol Hills	-	115,000
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000	180,000
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Eastridge "A"	-	150,000
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	210,000	220,000
Forest Hills "B"	210,000	250,000
Forest Hills "C"	250,000	270,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	250,000	300,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	Please Call	-
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Sta. Elena "A"	1,600,000	1,750,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	2,100,000
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Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	170,000
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Tagaytay Midlands	780,000	Please Call
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
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Market seen moving . . .

From page B1

another 0.92 percent week-on-week to close at 1,119.07 on Friday, bringing its total loss to 4.2 percent since the start of the year.

Irving Ackerman of I. Ackerman & Co., one of the founders of the local bourse, said the market remained in "very difficult" conditions.

"The opportunity for profit exists if you have enough holding power. Eventually, the market will turn but for the moment, very few issues offered trading opportunities," Ackerman said. One of the few, he added, was First Philippine Holdings whose share price had fallen to very low levels.

He also said the volatility of stocks caught in "special situations" like Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. could also present some trading opportunities.

Rolly Pineda, a dealer at First Orient Securities, said the market might still go down due to lack of any fresh incentive.

He said the major factors weighing down on the market were the volatility in the global markets as well as domestic political squabbles.

"I'm not optimistic for the next week or so. We're a little over 1,100, so I think the market will just move sideways by 20 points up or down," Pineda said.

Among the stocks to watch out for this week, according to Pineda, are First Philippine Holdings, which he said presented buying opportunities on weakness, as well as Petron Corp., which reported good earnings for the second quarter.

Equitable PCI Bank chief market strategist Michael Ricafort said that on the technical basis, there was still no clear sign of a near-term bottom for the stock market index.

"Technically, the index appears to be once again about to start indicating oversold signals that were last seen in the early part of July 2002. This means we cannot rule out a market bounce toward the 1150 initial resistance," Ricafort said.

The United States released last week a weaker-than-expected economic growth for the second quarter and manufacturing growth for the month of July.

Stock market portal 2tradeasia.com said that as the wave of accounting concerns over some of the world's leading players had subsided, the limelight had shifted again on policy actions that would be taken by US authorities against the Iraqi government.

It also said that the quarter-on-quarter bottom line improvement posted by some of the local market's leading players should merit attention.

"Capital spending for the remaining quarters should start to improve as long as operating cash flows progress, while stock prices should eventually rise as investors obtain more sensible expectations for risks and rewards," 2tradeasia.com said.

"For the coming days, emphasis will be given on trends in the labor market, as well as indicative consumer confidence data, as these influence household income and consumer spending. Start accumulating fundamentally sound but technically beaten stocks," it said.

2tradeasia.com said the Phisix's immediate support was at 1,100, secondary at 1,070 and resistance at 1,150 to 1,200. ***Doris C. Dumlao***

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Camp John Hay Golf	270,000	Valle Verde CC	155,000
Canlubang Golf	550,000	Tagaytay Midlands	820,000
Canyon Woods	170,000	Wack Wack	6,875,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	BUYING:	
Eagle Ridge A	300,000	Alabang A	1,550,000
Forest Hills A	210/250/240	Baguio Country Club	700,000
Manila Golf Corp	12.5M	Camp John Hay Golf	270,000
Manila Southwoods A/B	550/650	Eagle Ridge A/B	300/400
Mla S'woods A/B Inclmo 30%DP	14,000/16,000	Manila Golf (Indiv)	11M
		Manila Polo	2,750,000
Mt. Malarayat A	350,000	Mt. Malarayat C	450,000
Rivera "A"/C	180,000/350,000	Quezon City Sports	290,000
Sta. Elena A/B	1.625M/2M	Rivera "C"	320,500
Sherwood	100,000	Rockwell Club	380,000
Subic Yacht (Indiv)	150,000	Sta. Elena A	1,625,000
T'tay H'land Spa +Lodge	730,000	Tagaytay Highland Golf	820,000
Tagaytay Highland Club	420,000	Tagaytay Midlands	800,000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	850,000	Valley Golf	270,000
		Wack Wack	6,875,000

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7.	CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	180,000.00	-
8.	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	420,000.00	-
9.	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB	200,000.00	-
10.	EAGLERIDGE "B"	-	390,000.00
11.	FONTANA "D"	70,000.00	-
12.	FOREST HILLS "A"	-	220,000.00
13.	MANILA GOLF CLUB (Corp.)	12,600,000.00	-
14.	MANILA POLO CLUB	2,800,000.00	2,700,000.00
15.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	630,000.00	-
16.	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	700,000.00	Please call
17.	MIMOSA (Ind.)	120,000.00	-
18.	MT. MALARAYAT "A"	350,000.00	-
19.	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB	30,000.00	-
20.	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"	Please call	-
21.	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "B"	Please call	Please call
22.	ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	-	Please call
23.	PABLO DE ORO	400,000.00	-
24.	PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN ASSOCIATION	80,000.00	-
25.	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB "A"	100,000.00	-
26.	PUNTA FUEGO	650,000.00	-
27.	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	210,000.00	195,000.00
28.	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "A"	180,000.00	-
29.	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "B"	250,000.00	-
30.	RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "C"	350,000.00	320,000.00
31.	SHERWOOD HILLS "A"	80,000.00	-
32.	SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	190,000.00	Please call
33.	SPA & LODGE	800,000.00	-
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, August 2, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	245,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	45.5	44.5	45	581,200
China Banking Corp.	600	600	600	600	120
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	28.5	29.5	28.5	29.5	645,200
First E-Bank Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	3,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	35	35	34	34.5	227,200
Philippine National Bank	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	7,400
Security Bank Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	1,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	18	18	18	18	30,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Abacus Financial	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	70,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1200	1220	1200	1220	510
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	900	900	885	900	6,610
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22	22	22	22	11,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	1,300,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	510	510	500	505	25,440
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.03	0.034	0.029	0.034	21,800,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.026	0.029	0.026	0.029	30,600,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	8,000
Piltel	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	312.5	312.5	305	310	89,050
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	19.75	19.5	19.5	8,200
Manila Electric Co. B	28	28.5	28	28	905,900
Petron Corp.	1.72	1.76	1.72	1.74	1,329,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	86,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	126,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.35	3.5	3.35	3.5	621,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.25	12.25	12	12	122,700
RFM Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.81	0.84	1,110,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46	46.5	46	46.5	129,600
San Miguel Corp. B	51.5	52.5	51.5	52.5	94,100
Universal Robina Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.2	4,837,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.38	2.38	2.36	2.38	2,997,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	20,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	5,380,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	1,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.25	13.5	1,529,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	1,200,000
Ionics Inc.	5	5.1	5	5.1	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	425,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.65	3,680,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.4	70,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	410,000
Music Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	140,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3	3	3	3	2,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	2,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	9.5	9.8	9.5	9.8	16,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.27	840,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22.25	22.25	22.25	22.25	101,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6	6	6	6	18,240,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	90,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	650,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.94	1.94	970,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.18	1,130,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.09	0.0925	0.09	0.0925	10,100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	10,941,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	510,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	320,000
Omico Corp.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0024	0.0024	6,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	50,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0026	0.0028	0.0026	0.0028	31,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0026	0.0026	10,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	1,200,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000

CURRENCIES

Aug. 2, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.015332	1.000000	51.1570
Japan	Yen	0.008511	0.008382	0.4288
United Kingdom	Pound	1.586659	1.562700	79.9430
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.130173	0.128207	6.5587
Switzerland	Franc	0.690045	0.679625	34.7676
Canada	Dollar	0.638012	0.628378	32.1459
Singapore	Dollar	0.577681	0.568958	29.1062
Australia	Dollar	0.546465	0.538213	27.5334
Bahrain	Dinar	2.693330	2.652661	135.7022
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.270755	0.266667	13.6419
Brunei	Dollar	0.574218	0.565547	28.9317
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000111	0.000109	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.024117	0.023753	1.2151
UAE	Dirham	0.276462	0.272287	13.9294
Korea	Won	0.000866	0.000853	0.0436
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.984900	50.3845
Argentina	Real	0.280478	0.276243	14.1318
Brazil	Real	0.305823	0.301205	15.4087
Denmark	Kroner	0.134624	0.132591	6.7830
India	Rupee	0.020901	0.020585	1.0531
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.267228	0.263193	13.4642
Mexico	New Peso	0.103194	0.101636	5.1994
New Zealand	Dollar	0.470911	0.463800	23.7266
Norway	Kroner	0.133247	0.131235	6.7136
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017093	0.016835	0.8612
South Africa	Rand	0.099153	0.097656	4.9958
Sweden	Kroner	0.105932	0.104332	5.3373
Syria	Pound	0.019753	0.019455	0.9953
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.030381	0.029922	1.5307
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000752	0.000741	0.0379

Mitsubishi . . .

From page B1

starting next year.

Dizon expected the AUV to make a dent in other automotive markets in the Asean just like in the Philippines, where it accounted for roughly a third of the total industry sales (or equivalent to the market share of all passenger car models) and was credited for keeping the industry afloat after the 1997 financial crisis.

Dizon cited the global trend of growing customer preference for utility vehicles over sedans which he said was likely to continue in the medium to long term.

"We expect the share of passenger cars to decline further in the coming years especially with the next generation of AUVs approaching the quality of the current compact sport utility vehicles (SUVs)," Dizon said.

Dizon stressed that the AUV was still the Philippine automotive industry's main strength and best export bet because of its high local content (at least 40 percent) and the Filipinos' affinity to the home-designed AUV.

MBC-ARMM partnership

IN MY previous column, I talked about the synergy that is now shaping the emergence of a new Mindanao. Last month, for instance, the Mindanao Business Council was in the forefront of three important events: the First Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-Eaga) Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Security Congress (CIQS); the First Mindanao Human Resources Skills Development (HRSD) Summit, and the launching of the Mindanao Information and Communications Technology Task Force.

While these events are distinct and separate from one another, they have one underlying theme—people. As a business institution, MBC is relentless in giving support and assistance to Mindanao's businesses and industries. Unfortunately, it had been remiss in proactively improving and enhancing human resource skills that go well with Mindanao's development strategies. But we are now correcting this.

In the 1st BIMP-Eaga CIQS, we are one with our North Sulewesi counterpart in expressing the urgency to harmonize rules, regulations and processes in trading goods, and most especially in the movement of people. We noted that there were cases of illegal entry in both countries that undermine the spirit of cooperation that BIMP-Eaga was espousing. It is worth mentioning here that the Indonesian police had consulted with our Davao law enforcers on how to maintain peace and order, and in dealing with kidnap groups, among others.

Also, during the launching of the Mindanao Information and Communications Technology Task Force, the concern over upgrading human resource interwove with issues on e-governance, infrastructure and e-services. While Mindanao has produced world-class computer programmers and/or web developers, the dearth of qualified IT graduates, practitioners and instructors cancels out Mindanao's potential as an e-service hub.

Thus, it was one historic event in Mindanao when MBC, in coordination with the Technical Education Skills Development Authority, conducted the 1st Mindanao HRSD Summit. Eight resolutions were passed during the summit. A task force was also created to "pursue policies and programs that will build a strong foundation for human resource development in the 21st Century." The resolutions battled for the improved quality of the technical vocational education training (TVET) sector in Mindanao and urged Congress, local government units, and regional development councils to help enact legislation for human resource training. Moreover, Tesda was requested to enhance its manpower complement in Mindanao and the government was urged to extend official development assistance (ODA) funds to all regions in Mindanao. And, in order to help ensure the consistency of Tesda programs in Mindanao, the participants urged the government to appoint a representative from the Mindanao TVET providers to the Tesda National Board.

But what was most striking during the summit was that Mindanao has a new ally in Tesda's director general Dante Liban. DG Liban has assigned himself as the champion for Mindanao.

This is very encouraging and inspiring because although we have champions of Mindanao in the persons of Presidential Adviser for Mindanao Affairs Paul Dominguez, Presidential Adviser for One Million Jobs Cito Lorenzo, and Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza, it is worth noting that a public official of DG Liban's caliber, who is a non-Mindanaoan, has committed his time and expertise for the sake of Mindanao. It is worth noting that all of them have worked closely with the Mindanao Business Council when they were still with the private sector.

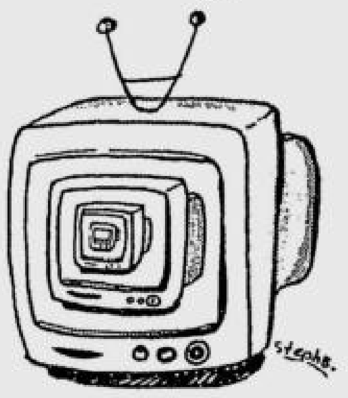
MINDANAO ONE

Joji Ilagan-Bian

* * *

Incidentally, today is the opening of the 1st Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao Business Conference (ABC) in Cotabato City. The MBC and ARMM will be signing a Memorandum of Agreement that will formally seal our partnership and cooperation through information sharing, access to market and network, and information technology. This is an opportunity for both ABC and MBC to formalize a partnership that has been ongoing over the past few years. It is one way wherein both councils will further empower themselves by closing ranks, providing a multiplier effect in terms of synchronized activities that are mutually beneficial. This is our way of contributing to the "strong republic" envisioned by the Macapagal administration, by making sure that our respective constituencies are organizationally strengthened and mobilized to help effect business in Mindanao for the greater benefit of its people.

Cable TV piracy problem in RP seen worsening



CABLE television piracy in the Philippines is growing at an alarming rate, with revenue losses now estimated at more than P100 million a year, said cable TV industry leaders.

Rene Esguerra, vice president of cable distributor Asian Cable Communication Inc. or Accion, said that "as the problem involves several pirated channels, revenue losses each year from illegal re-broadcasting on cable TV is likely to be several hundreds of millions of pesos."

Illegal cable broadcasting takes many forms, including the interception of cable programming services without the approval of the cable operator and the unauthorized showing of films or programs from VHS tapes VCDs and DVDs.

But industry members said the most common form of illegal broadcasting in the Philippines involved the use of foreign receivers and decoders known as "black boxes."

Illegal cable operators use these black boxes to downlink program signals—usually sports and movie channels—from foreign satellites and retransmit them through cable to local subscribers.

Viewers can often tell if a signal is being broadcast illegally through the following signs: foreign language advertisements, announcements or subtitles and the appearance of the logo of the satellite pay TV operator (usually called the "bug") on the TV screen.

To help reduce the incidence of illegal broadcasting, Hong Kong-based program provider Star recently announced it would package its top channels—ESPN, Star Sports, Star Movies, Star World and National Geographic Channel—and offer it at 40 percent lower than the cost of taking channels individually.

Esguerra also admitted that while the industry had actively lobbied regulators to address the piracy issue, much work had to be done in putting teeth to the anti-piracy drive.

He said the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) had informed cable TV operators that it was the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) of the trade and industry department that was in charge since intellectual property was involved in cable piracy.

Gov't urged to address copyright violation woes

THE RAMPANT selling of illegally copied and printed textbooks in the country is feared to generate renewed protest from the international community already alarmed by the country's intellectual property rights (IPR) violations.

Intellectual property rights lawyer Gilbert T. Reyes of the Poblador, Bautista and Reyes Law Offices said this as he urged the government to send a stronger signal to the international community that it has the resolve to battle the copyright piracy problem in the country.

Reyes said the Philippines was ranked the second worst territory for publishers in Asia last year and was placed in the Priority Watchlist of the most notorious IPR violators in the world due to the rampant illegal reprinting of textbooks.

The problem, Reyes said, was fueled by the multimillion-peso racket practiced by a number of local businessmen, including local printers and publishers, involving the illegal reproduction of scientific, technical and medical textbooks.

"This used to be just a university belt menace, but it has been uncovered that even a number of professors and academic institutions are unwittingly or deliberately promoting textbook piracy," Reyes disclosed.

The primary victims are legitimate publishers most of which are based either in the United States or Europe, Reyes said. "But the real victims are the students, the government and local business as a whole."

He pointed out that while pirated textbooks might be cheaper than the original copies, piracy discouraged publishers from selling new and revised editions to the Philippine market.

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Subic Freeport exceeds first-half expectations

By Jerry Esplanada

DON'T be surprised if you see Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chair Felicito Payumo grinning from ear to ear these days.

"The first semester of 2002 has been great. The Subic Freeport's performance during the first six months exceeded results during the same period last year despite the worldwide economic slump after Sept. 11," Payumo told the INQUIRER the other day.

That is why, the former Bataan legislator said, "the Freeport community is feeling good."

"We informed Malacañang about the good news the weekend before President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (last July 22)," Payumo also said.

Payumo disclosed he was "even more bullish about our second semester performance," citing the following indicators: Freeport exports totaled $701 million, an increase of nearly 50 percent over Jan.-June 2001 figures; P1.58 billion in new investments were committed, 150 percent higher than last year's figures; total workforce as of June 30 was 49,922, an increase of 29.1 percent; revenue collections were up by 19 percent to P1.56 billion; and, tourist arrivals totaled 4.5 million, an increase of 169 percent.

Pleased

Payumo said he was "sure the Arroyo administration would be pleased with these indicators because while others were not so good, ours showed positive percentage changes."

When interviewed, he credited the nearly 50-percent increase in first semester exports to the "opening of new manufacturing plants and the expansion of existing ones."

"The last quarter production is traditionally higher, so we expect even higher results for the second half of the year," Payumo said.

When he assumed the top SBMA post in 1998, the Freeport's exports amounted to only $544 million. "The following year, they breached the $1-billion mark. In 2000, they totaled $1.23 billion. Last year, it dipped slightly to $1.08 billion. This year, our target is $1.5 billion. As of June 30, we're already in the $700 million level," Payumo pointed out.

Wistron Infocomm Philippines (formerly Acer), maker of personal computers and laptops, was the Freeport's top performer—with exports of $580.6 million—during the first six months of the year.

According to Payumo, the company "closed down their plant in Europe due to the weak electronics market and consolidated their production in Subic, their most cost-competitive facility which, by the way, won over their Shanghai plant despite the low labor cost in China."

The Freeport's other top producers included Sanyo Denki, the Japanese computer parts manufacturer that exported a total of $21 million, while air-conditioner makers Taiwan Hitachi and wood processor Juken Sangyo registered $7.4 million and $6.4 million in exports.

Jobs and investments

In his five-page report to Malacañang, Payumo noted that the Freeport was "on track with its job creation mandate, the core of President Arroyo's poverty alleviation program."

"For nearly four years now, employment in the Freeport has been on the upend. From January to June, some 10,200 new workers were hired by locator-companies, bringing the total to 49,922, which is 29.1 percent higher than last year's figure of 38,650," he said.

Last May, the President witnessed the inauguration of the $100-million production facility of Sankyo Seiki, a Japanese firm that manufactures micromotors for computers. Initially, the company committed to hire 3,500 local workers but later increased the number to 8,000 following an expansion move.

Including employees of SBMA and its subsidiary, Freeport Services Corp., the Freeport's total workforce reached 54,922, which was 83 percent higher than its peak employment level of 30,000 when it was still a US naval facility.

During the first semester, a total of 81 new investments worth P1,581,956,629 were approved by the SBMA board. "That's a 150-percent jump from the P600 million in investments for the same period in 2001. The new investments covered manufacturing, trading, IT services, restaurant and other tourism-oriented operations," Payumo noted.

Japanese investors Juken Sangyo and Sankyo Seiki expanded their manufacturing plants as they leased additional space barely months after the start of their operations. From 4.7 hectares, Juken Sangyo now has 8.8 ha while Sankyo Seiki's area was increased to 9.6 ha from 6.6 ha.

Payumo said he was "very pleased with the investor community who serves as our promoters and marketers because the investors are more credible, having been in Subic and the fact that they're still there and they're expanding, definitely a more effective advertisement than I can make."

Meanwhile, "a temporary setback is now Reese Brothers Philippines, a call center, due to the financial difficulties besetting WorldCom, the mother company of MCI which happens to be the center's major client," Payumo disclosed.

Tax collections

Back to the good news. Payumo cited the hefty P1.56-billion remittance of the Freeport to the National Treasury.

The combined collections of duties and taxes by the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue were up 24 percent from last year's P1.25 billion, he said.

"It is remarkable that Subic Freeport was able to increase its contribution to the National Treasury while economic difficulty is felt everywhere. Equally remarkable was the assistance it provided to several neighboring towns and cities," said the SBMA chair.

For the first time since SBMA's creation in 1992, local government units directly affected by the declaration of the Freeport Zone got their 2-percent share of the 5-percent gross income taxes paid by business establishments operating in the Freeport. LGU developments funds were reverted back to the National Treasury during the "previous administration."

A total of P30,994,135 in revenue share went to the towns of Hermosa, Morong and Dinalupihan in Bataan and Subic, San Antonio, Castillejos and San Marcelino in Zambales.

An additional revenue share of P3.19 million went to the municipalities of Dinalupihan and Hermosa; Porac and Floridablanca in Pampanga, and the cities of Angeles and Olongapo, came from the Subic-Clark pipeline project of Coastal Petroleum. Funds given were in proportion to the length of pipeline traversing each town or city.

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Another deficit in July, says budget chief

By Clarissa S. Batino

BUDGET Secretary Emilia Boncodin said Friday that the government probably incurred another budget deficit in July, but the figure would most likely be lower than in recent months.

The Macapagal administration managed to control spending and augment its tax collections in July, Boncodin told a group of economists.

The government is hoping to keep its deficit below P130 billion by year's end, a target that now seems unreachable.

The deficit had already hit P119.72 billion in just six months, well exceeding the target for the period of P78.26 billion.

In June, however, the deficit slowed down to just P12.8 billion.

Boncodin told members of the Philippine Economic Society that she was not discounting the possibility that the government would exceed its target this year, "but for now (we) are not thinking about it."

Boncodin said July was promising to be as encouraging as June.

She disclosed that the government's spending fell significantly to about P49 billion in July, down from the monthly average of P62 billion in the first quarter of the year.

In terms of tax collections, however, the government still needs to plug some leakage.

Internal Revenue Commissioner Rene Bañez reported in the same forum sponsored by the PES that his agency's collections continued to be below targets.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue may again miss its P38-billion target for July, he said.

Bañez said the BIR needed a "fundamental change" before the government could meet its zero-deficit target by 2006.

The BIR, he said, would have to raise its tax efforts to 14 percent of gross domestic product in the next three to five years from a projected 11.31 percent this year.

"Raising the bureau's effort ratio to 14 percent requires that it collects an additional P35 billion to P40 billion every year for the next four years over and above the growth attributable to economic expansion," he said.

"Given the bureau's current cultural and institutional arrangement, achieving the numbers mentioned 'simply cannot be done. Fundamental change is necessary," he added.

Extension of agri-fisheries act sought

THE COUNTRY'S foreign donors are asking Congress to approve a bill extending by another year the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act.

The law is set to lapse in 2004.

"There is a need to extend the AFMA for another year because there are projects that are to be completed in the next two to three years," World Bank country director Robert Vance Pulley said in the recently held donors forum at the Department of Agriculture.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said a hearing on proposed amendments to the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act would be held this week.

The World Bank, meanwhile, said it would extend some $75 million to $100 million in new loans to allow the local agriculture sector to compete effectively in increasingly liberalized markets.

The loans are meant to give the sector a more reliable marketing system.

The World Bank program is also designed to arrest declining productivity of key crops such as rice, corn and sugar.

"By the end of the program, we would want to see the country compete for key markets, both domestic and international, with other high-value products for which the Philippines has the potential," World Bank senior rural sector specialist Carol Geron said in an interview.

Documents on the program showed that reforms would focus on the public expenditure program of the agriculture department.

The Japanese government has already released funds for a technical grant that will help local agriculture officials implement the World Bank program and help farmers diversify into other crops.
Christine A. Gaylican

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Tan must honor PAL commitment, gov't says

By Clarissa s. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT will contest this week tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan's bid to break out of a P2-billion deal that requires him to buy the stakes of state-run corporations in Philippine Airlines Inc.

A lawyer from one of the government banks involved in the matter said in an interview that the Office of the Solicitor General would come out with the government's reply to a case filed by Tan before the Makati Regional Trial Court on Friday.

A ranking official from another state-owned bank said Tan's case was "weak."

"Using the 1997 financial crisis as an excuse to get out of its obligations should not be entertained by the courts. Otherwise, all contracts entered under that environment should have been declared null and void," he said.

Tan, as an individual stockholder, signed in April 1996 an agreement that required him to buy at P5 a share, or some P2 billion, the government's remaining stake in PAL.

His end of the deal was guaranteed by his flagship companies, Fortune Tobacco Inc. and Asia Brewery Inc.

On July 23, five of Tan's companies—Ascot Holdings and Equities, Cube Factor and Equities, Sierra Holdings and Equities, Network Holdings and Equities, and Pol Holdings Inc.—asked the court to relieve them of this obligation, citing difficulties they encountered as a result of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis.

The five companies, which used to own 50.04 percent of PR Holdings Inc., PAL's former majority owner, invoked Article 1267 of the Civil Code that allowed a corporation to break out of a contract when it would be very difficult for it to meet its commitments.

Development Bank of the Philippines president Simon Paterno said the terms of the P2-billion put option agreement between Tan and the government "were crystal clear."

"I'm confident that, ultimately, the parties concerned would honor the contract," said Paterno, who leads the government's efforts to collect from Tan and PAL.

On Friday, PAL said it more than doubled its net profit to P983.9 million in the first quarter to June this year, overcoming its troubles last year.

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Unitrust owners press bid to derail PDIC rehab plan

DISPUTED owners of Unitrust Development Bank have threatened to derail the government's bid to re-bid the rehabilitation of the shuttered thrift bank unless they first get a first crack at reviving the lender with their chosen foreign partners.

A group led by former Unitrust president Francis Yuseco has been blocking the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.'s efforts to let the Philippine Bank of Communications rehabilitate Unitrust.

"No rational bidder will come in because they know we will oppose them," Yuseco said in an interview.

Yuseco's group has submitted its own program that allows it to team up with either First Federal Bank of Taiwan or NHI Capital Fund of Irvine, California in rehabilitating Unitrust.

These foreign companies have reportedly agreed to pump some P285 million into Unitrust, which has 13 branches.

Yuseco said his group wanted to discuss its proposal with PDIC, but that it was wary that PDIC was still bent on pursuing "baseless" cases against it.

These cases include those that may disqualify Yuseco and fellow Unitrust shareholders Leopoldo Valcarcel and Pedro Montanez from participating in a rehabilitation program for Unitrust.

Yuseco's group has linked up with a Japanese shareholder, Minamoto Saiken Kaishu, and a Japanese firm, G. Universal Co. Ltd., used by self-styled cult leader Genta Ogami to take control of Unitrust.

These shareholders each account for 20 percent of Unitrust. With their shareholdings, they can block any effort to sell Unitrust as this will entail the approval of shareholders who control at least 67 percent of the bank.

Elena R. Torrijos

Growth in wireless nearly saturated

GROWTH in the wireless sector is expected to taper off in the coming months, but there is still room for new players as many subscribers continue to subscribe to more than one operator, analysts have said.

Westlink Global Equities research head Mark Lago said in an interview last week that the cellular market was already approaching the "saturation point," but the "multiple SIM (subscriber identification module) card phenomenon" was slowing this down.

"It's really approaching the saturation point on a single SIM card basis, but I think it will take another one-and-a-half to two years before the market really gets saturated on a multiple SIM card basis," he said.

Stockbrokerage Morgan Stanley said in a July 26 report that cellular growth in the Philippines would most likely slow down in the remaining half of the year after reaching a penetration rate of 14 percent as of end-2001.

It pointed out that cellular leaders Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc. both posted declines in their quarterly net subscriber additions in the first quarter of the year.

Smart and sister company Pilipino Telephone Corp. reported a more than 20-percent decline in net additions from 763,000 in the last quarter of 2001 to 608,000 in the first quarter of 2002.

Globe also posted a 47-percent drop in quarterly net additions.

But 2TradeAsia.com analyst Joanne Miguel said the approximately 14-percent penetration rate still left some room for new players, and that this was far from market saturation.

The decline in the wireless players' net additions could be attributed to the economy itself, she said.

Abigail L. Ho

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Investments in electronics 'alarmingly' down

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

INVESTMENTS in electronics projects registered with the Board of Investments and Philippine Economic Zone Authority have dwindled to alarmingly low levels in the first half of the year, casting a dark cloud over the prospects of the country's biggest export.

A report of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. (Seipi) showed investments in BOI- and Peza-registered electronic projects hitting only a combined $92 million in the first six months of the year.

The BOI notched $22 million in the first five months, while Peza chalked up $77 million in the first six months.

These figures were a far cry from the $1.04 billion average annual investments poured into the electronic sector over the past five years, which had driven the industry to two-digit export growth levels and a bigger share of the country's total export earnings—roughly 70 percent—in the last few years.

The miniscule investments in electronics echoed the poor overall performance of the two agencies.

BOI investments dropped 64.26 percent to P11.81 billion in the first five months of the year from P33.04 billion year-on-year. Peza investments tumbled 20.43 percent to P14.8 billion during this same period.

Investments in new and expansion projects in the electronics sector translate to more dollar sales. They are used as a gauge in forecasting export growth.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II has blamed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States for deflating investor confidence and further dimming the chances of a recovery in the United States, the country's biggest market for electronics products.

An industry source, however, blamed the BOI's and Peza's lean investment harvest in electronics on the government's inability to address the high cost of doing business in the Philippines, particularly electricity expenses and wages, because of its leaders' preoccupation with politics.

The industry source noted that China was sucking the bulk of new investments going into Asia. Even existing foreign and local investors in the electronics sector were planning to move shop to China due the government's inability to address the country's weaknesses, he said.

Apart from failing to live up to its promise of addressing businessmen's problems, the industry source also questioned the BOI's investment promotion strategy focusing on call centers.

DOF help sought in oil insurance row

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP of new oil companies has asked the Department of Finance to intervene in their complaint against the "questionable" business practices of nine insurance firms that, it says, the Insurance Commission has condoned.

In an interview, New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines president Fernando Martinez said the insurance firms refused to settle P165 million worth of claims filed by four members of his group.

Martinez explained that these claims accounted for purchases made by various customers of Subic Bay Distribution Inc., Liquigaz Corp., Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Rambi Development Corp.

He said the total insurance claims would reach P250 million if those of a local refiner were included.

The insurance firms cited by NPPAP were Stronghold Insurance Co. Inc., Malayan Insurance Co. Inc., Insular and HIH General Insurance Co., Western Guarantee Insurance, GSIS General Insurance, Wellington Insurance Co., Development Insurance and Security Corp., Security Pacific Assurance Corp., and Mega Pacific Insurance Corp.

"The unfair and dubious practices of these big names in the insurance industry is undermining the stability of our segment of the oil industry," Martinez said.

Oil firms require from their customers guarantees issued by the insurance firms. These insurance firms are liable in the event the oil firms' customers fail to pay up.

In a letter to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho dated July 11, Martinez said the insurers "wantonly refused to settle said claims, undermining the very essence of accepting and/or issuing sureties."

"The insurance firms made a mockery of surety laws by focusing on technicalities rather than substantive evidence for non-release of claims," he added.

He said the Insurance Commission appeared to be condoning the insurers actions by allowing these firms to continue issuing policies despite their complaint and those of companies from other industries.

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PROCUREMENT
SEN. Edgardo Angara (left) underscores need for a law to streamline government procurement during a meeting of the Philippine Association for Goverment Budget Administration Inc.

RFM, Zuellig scrap talks on joint venture

TALKS on a flour business joint venture between local food and beverage firm RFM Corp. and Switzerland-based Zuellig Group NA Inc. have fizzled out.

In a news briefing following a stockholders' meeting last week, RFM vice president Ramon Lopez disclosed that RFM and Zuellig were no longer talking about any strategic partnership.

"We don't know what their plans are for the Philippines," Lopez said. "We haven't heard from them again."

RFM held discussions with Zuellig for a couple of months early this year to explore opportunities in the flour business.

RFM was keen on taking in strategic partners to strengthen its remaining businesses following its divestment of its controlling stake in its crown jewel, Cosmos Bottling Corp.

The widely diversified Zuellig Group established a foothold in the Philippines in 1939 through Zuellig Pharma, which focused exclusively on the pharmaceutical and healthcare markets.

It now operates two local distribution companies—Zuellig Pharma Corp. and Metro Drug Inc.

Over time, Zuellig Pharma branched out from its base in the Philippines to other countries in the region.

While Zuellig had been active only in its distribution business, it was reported to be keen on forging a partnership with RFM focusing on the flour business, where it already had an exposure in other countries.

RFM's plan was to spin off its flour business and sell a 50-percent stake to a foreign strategic partner.

Doris C. Dumlao

NTT deals with PLDT laden with perks

By Doris C. Dumlao

JAPAN'S Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. has an array of incentives to keep its 15-percent stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. regardless of which group eventually gets management control of the local telecom giant.

Among the conditions attached by lender Japan Bank for International Cooperation to a recent $83.4-million loan to PLDT is that the stake held by NTT must not fall below 14.95 percent, according to notes to PLDT's latest financial statements.

Although NTT has not been earning cash dividends since it bought into PLDT, the Japanese telecom giant earns at least P350 million a year in the form of advisory and maintenance services.

Stock analysts say these fees may serve as a sufficient incentive for NTT to stay as a strategic partner no matter who takes the helm of PLDT.

PLDT's majority owner, First Pacific Co. Ltd. of Hong Kong, has decided to relinquish its controlling stake to a $925-million joint venture it is forming with tycoon John Gokongwei Jr.

The PLDT board is moving to block this takeover, as it insists that Gokongwei, as a competitor, cannot sit as a director.

The stake of NTT, which has an existing shareholder agreement with First Pacific, is held through subsidiary NTT Communications.

Under the terms of the JBIC loan, in the event of any proposed sale or transfer of PLDT's stock that will result in NTT Communications holding less than 14.95 percent of PLDT's voting stock, PLDT will be "required to prepay, immediately upon effectiveness of such sale or transfer, all principal outstanding under the loan, together with accrued interest."

However, prepayment will not be required if following such sale or transfer:

- NTT Communications will retain the approval rights under the shareholder agreement with First Pacific; and,
- JBIC, in its sole discretion, determines that NTT Communications' participation in the expansion of PLDT's cellular business through the GSM network capacity of Smart Communications Inc. would not be reduced.

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Global stock dip to cut G7 growth rate by 0.7%

TRADERS on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange keep an eye on the indicators. A number of factors conspired to send the markets lower in early trading: the unemployment rate for July remained at 5.9 percent and the factory orders for June were down 2.4 percent. AP

BRUSSELS—Steep stock losses could knock nearly three quarters of a percentage point off growth in the Group of Seven industrial countries this year and hit US consumption and growth even harder, economic models suggest.

Benchmark US, Japanese and European share indices have shed 20 percent or more from this year's peaks, wiping billions off the value of stock markets, eroding household wealth.

Consumer confidence is suffering, as euro zone data showed on Friday, and analysts are cranking up their computers to work out just how badly economic growth will be hit if equity markets sustain, or even extend, these losses.

A wide range of economic models from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the US Federal Reserve and commercial banks all suggest the equity market rout has serious implications for growth.

A model developed by economists at the OECD shows that a 20-percent, simultaneous fall in share prices in G7 countries would lop 0.7 percentage point off their combined gross domestic product in the first year after such losses.

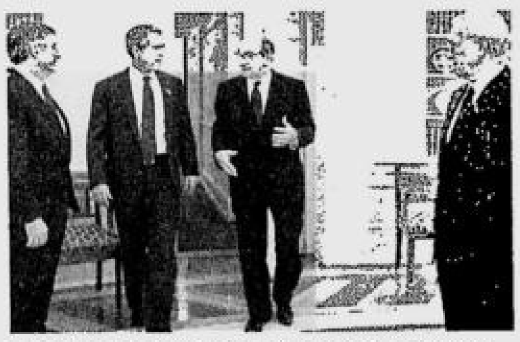
In common with other studies, this model shows the United States will be harder hit than Europe.

Stock market losses of this magnitude can be expected to depress US GDP by one percentage point in the first year alone, while growth in Germany, Europe's largest economy and one of its most sluggish, would fall by 0.4 percentage point.

ABN Amro economists have developed their own model and say a 20-percent decline in share prices would cut 2.3 percentage points off US growth over a two-year period and lop 1.3 percentage point off euro zone growth over a similar period.

"There is no question that these stock losses will hurt the real economy," said Tony Norfield, global head of foreign exchange research at ABN Amro in London. *Reuters*

O'Neill says US gov't fixing economy



PRESIDENT Bush talks with Federal Reserve Chair Greenspan (center) as Treasury Secretary O'Neill (right) and White House Chief of Staff Card (left) looked on in the oval office at the White House. AP

WASHINGTON—US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill on Saturday sought to reassure investors who have seen their retirement accounts shrink after a wave of corporate scandals that the government is making the repairs it needs to ensure the economy remains sound.

In an opinion piece published in The Washington Post, O'Neill said the US economy remains fundamentally strong despite the recent sharp drop in stock prices.

"We have had two straight quarters of solid growth. Consumer spending has stayed strong and business investment is picking up. As our economy continues to grow at a healthy pace, Americans will see their incomes and their retirement accounts grow as well," he said.

New government statistics show the US economy grew at a seasonal rate of just 1.1 percent in the second quarter, down from 5 percent in the first.

The lackluster second-quarter performance has fueled fears the economy could dip back into recession.

O'Neill has been criticized in recent weeks for not doing enough, as the Bush administration's chief economic spokesperson, to help buoy the markets. *Reuters*

Tyco accounting gets new scrutiny

BOSTON—No one knows better than Mark Swartz how all the pieces fit at troubled conglomerate Tyco International Ltd., but the chief financial officer is a casualty of the company's need to get a fresh start.

The announcement on Thursday by Tyco's new chief executive officer, Edward Breen, that Swartz was leaving the company, was expected, analysts said on Friday, noting Tyco's need for a clean start after the recent controversy that has dogged the company.

"The new CEO will want to establish his own team," said Barry Bannister, an analyst at Legg Mason. "It's absolutely nothing against Mark."

As the top lieutenant to Dennis Kozlowski, Tyco's disgraced chief executive officer who resigned in June, Swartz played a key role in structuring a company that became one of the world's largest manufacturing conglomerates from more than $60 billion in acquisitions.

Perhaps better than anyone, Swartz knows how all the pieces fit together at Tyco, whose accounting has drawn criticism for being opaque and misleading. *Reuters*

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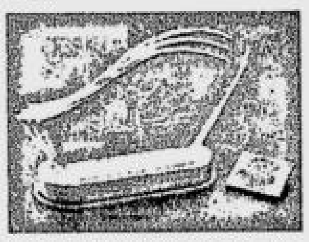

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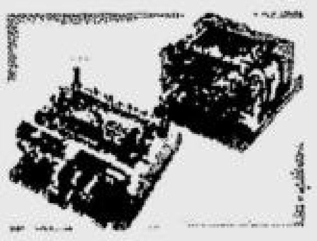

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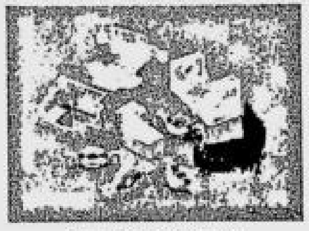

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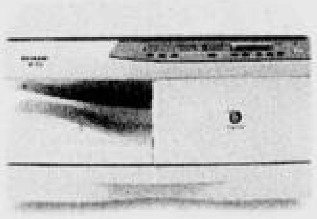

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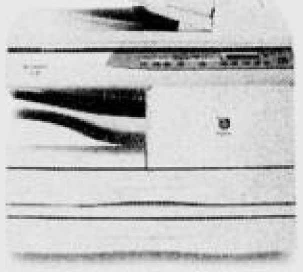

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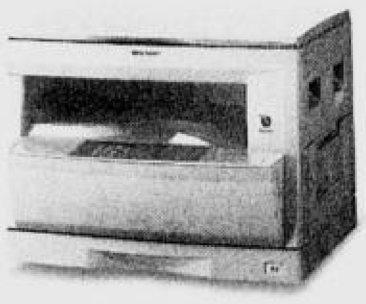

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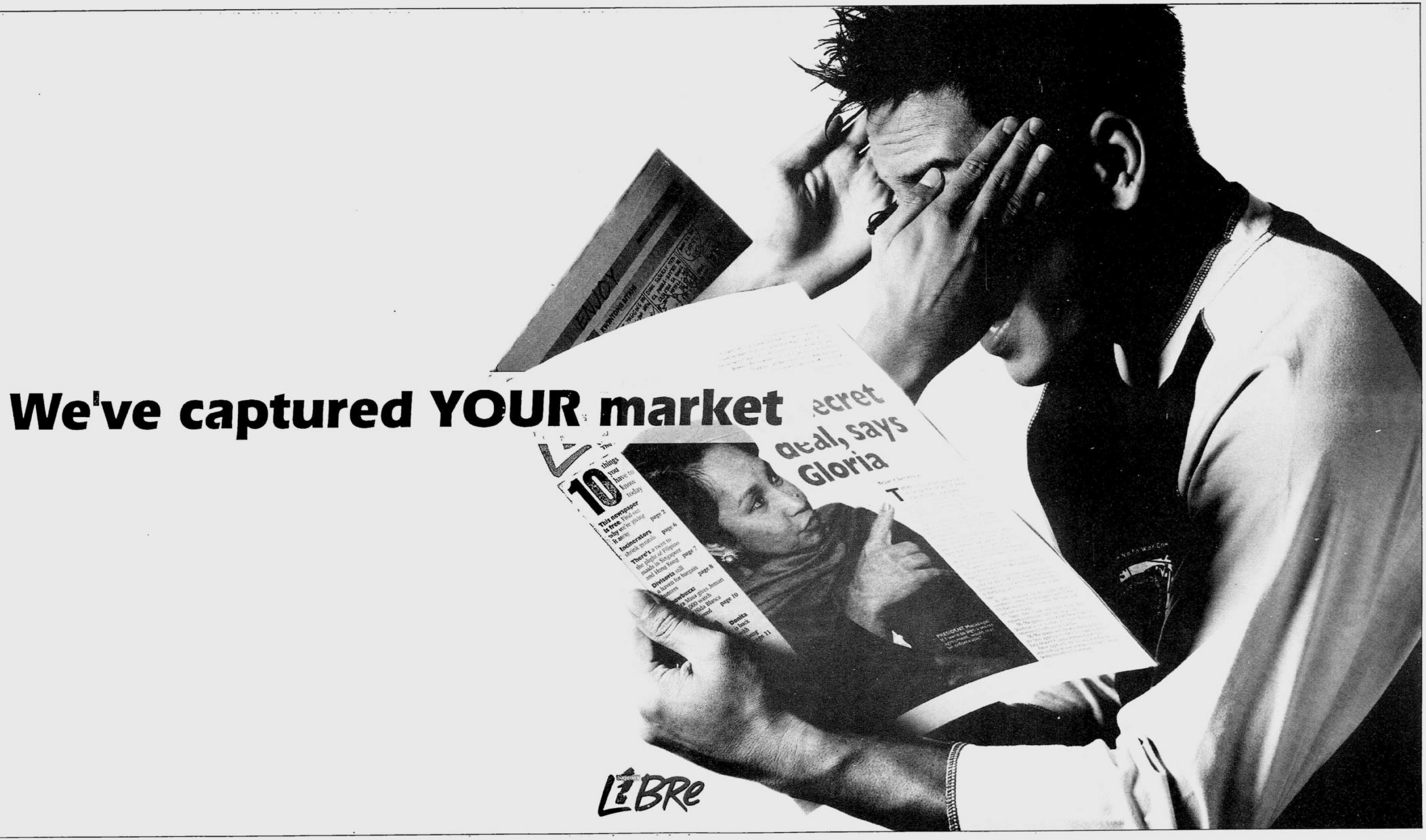
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LIBRE

Eurozone economic morale ebbs, firms optimistic

BRUSSELS—Economic sentiment in the euro zone deteriorated slightly in July, while a separate indicator of business climate unexpectedly rose, reports from the European Commission showed on Friday.

At a time when financial market turmoil is denting confidence around the world, the 12-member euro zone could not escape and the Commission's overall economic sentiment fell to 99.4, levels last seen in April, from 99.6 in June.

Still, that was less than the decline expected by economists whose consensus forecast had been for a drop to 99.2.

While consumer confidence fell to minus 10 from minus nine in June, in line with economists' expectations, the industrial confidence component remained unchanged at minus 10, instead of falling to minus 11.5 as they had expected.

A separate report also suggested resilience among euro zone companies as the Commission's business climate indicator unexpectedly rose to minus 0.35 in July from a revised minus 0.45 in June. The June figure had previously been reported as minus 0.43.

Still, economists were wary of basing too much optimism on these figures, particularly given the battery of weak economic reports released recently from the United States.

"It is slightly better than expected but all the risks are still to the downside," said Michael Klawitter, a strategist at West LB in London.

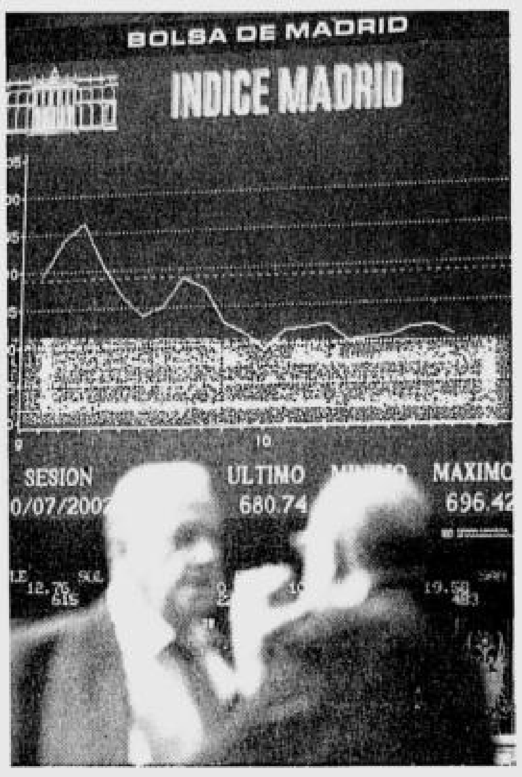
"The US weakness will filter through to the August numbers and so there is no change to the overall picture in which weakness in the euro zone will be more pronounced than previously expected.

The Commission's overall economic sentiment index was also depressed as construction confidence declined to minus 14 from minus 11, largely due to falls in order books.

Taken together with the decline in consumer sentiment, this outweighed an increase in the retail trade confidence index to minus 15 in July from minus 16 in June in the previous month.

The breakdown showed that consumers were becoming more downbeat about the general economic situations and the outlook for jobs.

"Overall, consumer expectations regarding their financial situation and savings over the next 12 months remained stable while the expected developments of the general economic situation and unemployment worsened in both the EU and the euro area," the Commission said.

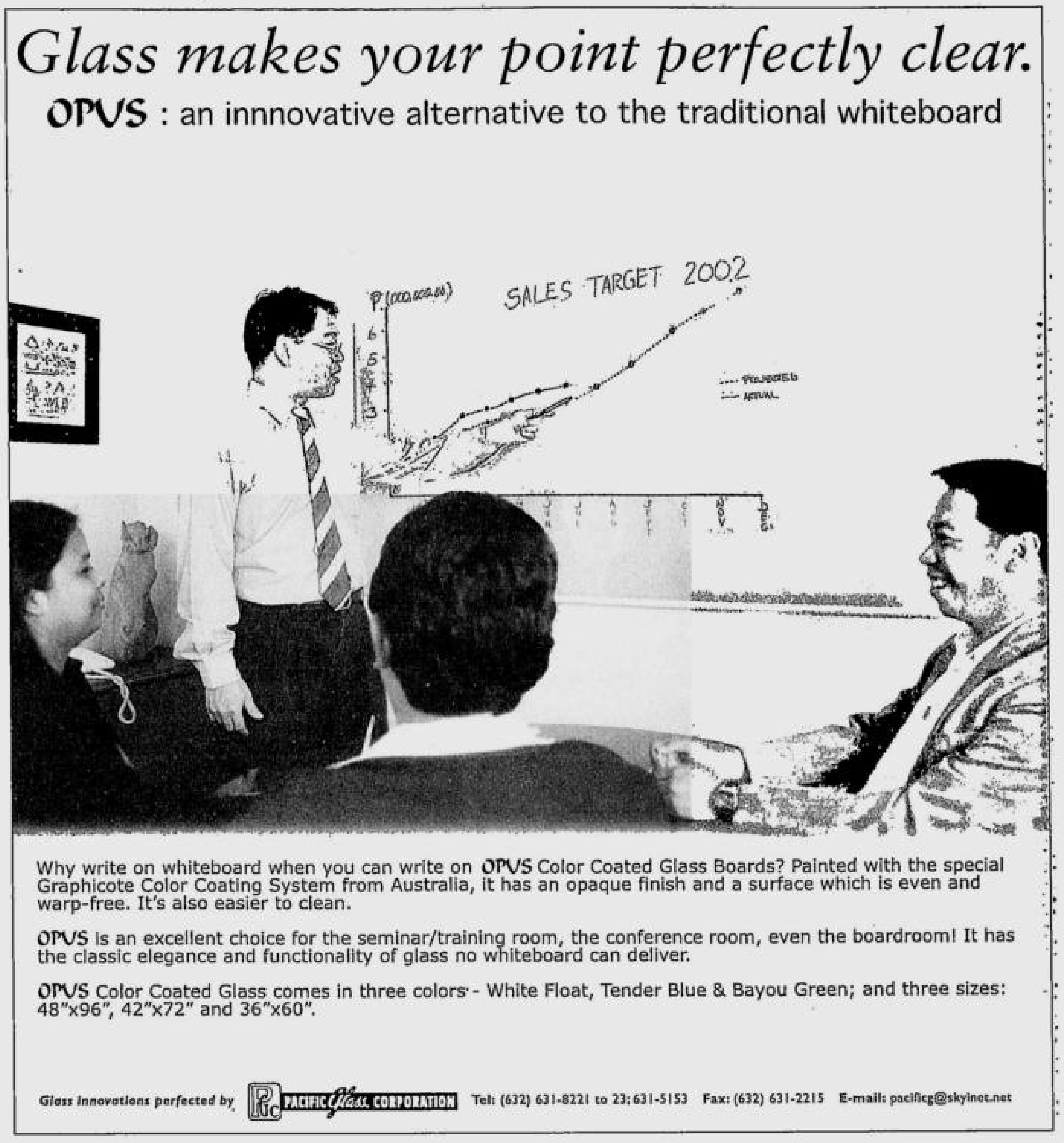


TWO men chat in front of a large display of current trading at Madrid Stock Exchange on July 30. Madrid general share prices lost 11.41 points, equal to 1.66 percent to 677.54, while the blue-chip Ibex-35 index down 136 points, or 2.04 percent, to 6.523,70.

One bright spot was most European consumers expect an easing of inflation pressures.

Such expectations will be reinforced by euro zone producer price data released separately by the European Union statistics office, which showed few signs of pipeline pressures.

Euro zone June producer prices fell 0.1 percent from the previous month and declined 1.1 percent from a year earlier, Eurostat said. *Reuters*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Japan unveils broad budget guidelines

TOKYO—Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and his economic advisers unveiled broad guidelines for next fiscal year's budget on Friday, but any bold plans are at risk of being eroded by tight-fisted bureaucrats and free-spending politicians.

The Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (CEFP) released an overview of the budget for fiscal 2003/04, starting next April, with Koizumi keen to combine tax and spending cuts in a package that will boost the economy while keeping spending down.

"Tax cuts are essential to reinvigorate and broaden private demand," the draft said. "But it is necessary that issuances of Japanese government bonds does not stray far from 30 trillion yen ($251.7 billion)," it said, referring to a debt cap on new JGB issues that was imposed for budgets in the current and 2001/02 fiscal years.

But specific targets such as one trillion yen in corporate tax cuts proposed by the panel's private-sector members last week were omitted or modified under pressure from the revenue-hungry Finance Ministry.

"The size, duration and content of tax cuts will be swiftly decided," the draft said.

Koizumi defended the decision to omit a specific figure for tax cuts, saying: "We will decide the specifics from now on. It is still not time to set the details."

Economics Minister Heizo Takenaka said the numbers would have to be reviewed but declined to cite any specific figure.

"It is the first time we have drawn up an overall guideline for the budget and I think that is significant," he told a news conference.

Politicians in Koizumi's own ruling party who have grown used to years of budget pork are also raising the pressure, saying the tentative recovery in the economy needs more fiscal support.

Business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported on Friday that the government and ruling parties are in final talks to set public works spending at 9 trillion yen, a 3-percent cut from the level for the current fiscal year.

That compares with a 10-percent cut in last year's budget, one of the few examples of progress in Koizumi's reform program, which had stressed the importance of reducing Japan's massive debt burden, the biggest in the advanced world.

The guidelines said general expenditure, the core of policy-related spending, would be held below 47.5 trillion yen budgeted this year and further reduced if possible.

Private-sector members of the CEFP had called for a target of 47 trillion yen. *Reuters*

China bullish on economy

BEIJING—Rosy new official forecasts show China is growing more confident in its economy as it starts to get a grip on deflation, even as a faltering U.S. market casts a shadow on revived exports, analysts said on Friday.

China's central bank has updated its outlook for 2002, saying growth could top 7.5 percent, powered by fixed asset investment growth of 15 percent and a 10-percent-plus rise in exports.

That is well above China's earlier goal of 7-percent growth for the year, but some analysts said the forecast issued on Thursday was cautious given the 7.8 percent growth in the first half.

"That looks conservative given the reasonably strong figures this year," said Paul Schymyck, a regional economist for IDEAglobal.com in Singapore.

"That looks like an achievable number, given . . . the strong rebound in the country's exports."

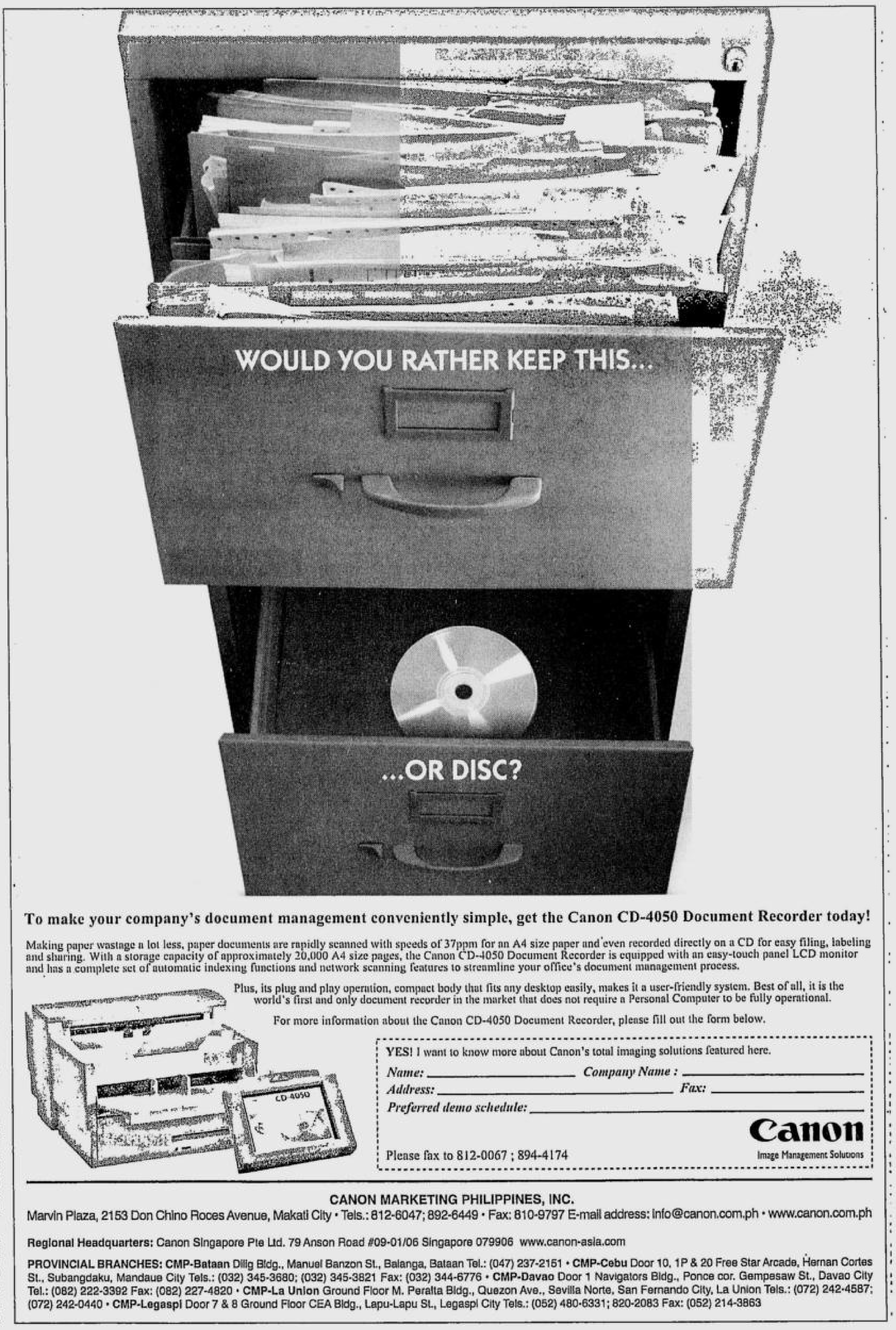
But others said the figures were just right in view of the uncertain global outlook.

"It's not too conservative, given that we are seeing signs of slowdown in the US, which is a key market for China," said Tai Hui, an economist with Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong.

The 10-percent growth in exports would blow past last year's sluggish 6.8-percent pace, yet implies a screeching slowdown in the second half of the year to offset the 14.2-percent growth of the first six months.

Exports have also been aided by a weakening US dollar, which has slid 11 percent against the euro this year and nearly 10 percent against the yen. As China's yuan currency is pegged to the dollar, its goods are cheaper to Japanese and European buyers.

But dreary economic data from the United States—which saw exports from China shoot up more than 19 percent in the first half—has sobered the trade outlook. *Reuters*



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L-BAHAY 712-16-92

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779m^{2}LA 170m^{2}FA 4br 2tb 3M nr. Filinvest2 0919-4027323

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LOT

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QUEZON CITY

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QUEZON CITY

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QUEZON CITY

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KALOOCAN

3RM 2TB C/P 4531544

PASIG

3BR 2TB Carpeted 641-7690

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BUYING USED CARS 8990215

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1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 3677523/24

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2% w/o Taking Car 8966633

2% w/oTaking Car 3732083

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3646928

★USED CAR LOAN 7262780

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

FURNITURE

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New Models 7213124

PETS

DOG TRAINER 09192050952

DOG TRAINER 4528681

Golden Ret Pups 09185221929

Shitzu Chapline 932-3378

SPORTING GOODS

22T Pool Sr New Compit 7767507

BILLIARDS P30/33/36/38T A1 Qlty B.New 8014494/8020566

WANTED TO BUY

B/SELL EDUC'L 8061574

BUYING ROLEX
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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

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5633742 5646593 09178473744

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B/SELL FULLY PD EDUC PLAN GIE 780-0106 / 0917-7939632

Executive Aircraft Beechcraft Baron B55 Fax (02)850-9018 For Information

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MISCELLANEOUS

Laptop 4Sale 09202407281

LASER DISC ORIG 8340446

YOSHIDA DENTAL UNIT 5235292

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

ACCTG GRAD W/ W/O EXP
COMP LITERATE 9421454

•RELIABLE MAIDS 8330946/47

UNDERBRD NURSE MIDWIFE MAID-ALL AROUND 7137030

MALE/FEMALE

CDT ENGR/MKTG/ESP'LIST CUSTOMS/ADM/RESEARCH & STATS CLRK Laureano Bldg. 2216 Pasong Tamo Makati

Dir. Hiring Office Staff
18-45yo 9134470 Mr. Galvez

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that the following blank Official Receipts duly registered under the name of **Orient Overseas Container Lines (OOCL)** were lost on **04 July 2002**, and are now deemed void:

O.R. No. 85
O.R. No. 90

Customers, vendors, business partners and the public are hereby warned not to accept the above mentioned Official Receipts from any party or entity.

(PDI - Aug. 5, 2002)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

FREE Care Giver Seminar
5614990 5638009

★OFC STAFF 18-40yo w/w/o exp 9134470 Ms. Ang Urgent★

HRD STF 0919-4639391 LYKA

★Urgent Ofc Personnel★
14/45 w/ w/o exp 9134470 Rica

Marketing Mgr Printing Co Pagemaker/Correll Typesetter Aurellia Operator 0920-2878691

OFC STF 09202061665 AL

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BALLOON ARTS
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LIMITED ENROLLMENT
YOU MUST
PRE-REGISTER
BALLOON
CAMP ASIA
532-3517
0917-8388000

CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Clark Special Economic Zone
Clark Field, Pampanga

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

Clark Development Corporation (CDC) through its Pre-qualification, Bid, and Awards Committee invites interested Companies for the:

SITE REMEDIATION AND CLEANUP PROJECT
CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE

The Contractor/Bidder who will be allowed to participate in the bidding of this project must be recognized under Philippine Laws.

Interested parties may submit pre-qualification requirements to the Office of the PBAC Chairman, Building 2125, E. Quirino Street, CSEZ, Clark Field, Pampanga, not later than **August 20, 2002**.

Terms of Reference (TORs) are available for issuance to interested Contractors/Bidders at the above cited address upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) each.

Clark Development Corporation hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, as well as to waive any defect or formality in such bids, and to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the corporation. CDC does not guarantee that an award to this project will be made.

All inquiries and letters shall be addressed to:

THE PBAC CHAIRMAN
Office of the VP-AOG
Clark Development Corporation
Building 2125, E. Quirino Street
CSEZ, Clark Field, Pampanga

(Sgd.) **DOUGLAS B. YBALLE**
PBAC for Services - Chairman
Clark Development Corporation

(PDI - July 29 & August 5, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and bid for the selection of the University's strategic partner in the planning, development and management under a long-term lease agreement of a 59-hectare component of the 98.5 hectare.

University of the Philippines North S&T Park

The UP Science and Technology (S&T) Park (North and South sectors) is envisioned to promote synergy between the academe and industry in Research and Development (R&D) collaboration in high-technology fields (e.g. I.T. Biotechnology, Education Technology, Energy Systems, etc.). The entire UP S&T Park occupies a total aggregate area of 163.5 hectares located in two non-contiguous sites in the UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City: The UP North S&T Park (98.5-hectare property along Commonwealth Avenue), and the UP South S&T Park (65-hectare property along C.P. Garcia Avenue).

The UP S&T Park offers access to the University's academic resources, IT infrastructure, support services, and many other unique location advantages, such as: research-active PhD faculty, specialized research and training laboratories, specialized libraries in different fields, computing facilities, fiberoptic network, training rooms and facilites; short-and long-term accommodation facilities; and sports, shopping and community amenities.

Prequalification forms and Terms of Reference (TOR) may be obtained from the UP North S&T Park Secretariat, Director's Office, 4/F ISSI Bldg./Virata Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 from **August 12 to 16, 2002**. Deadline of submission of duly accomplished prequalification documents will be on **August 30, 2002**. After the evaluation of the documents submitted, the prequalified developers shall be duly notifed of the schedule of subsequent activities. For inquries, please call Tel. No. **920-5301 to 99** loc. **4717**; or Tel. No. **920-6923**, **927-9238**; Fax No. **927-1034** (c/o Ms. Ludy Cubillas); E-mail: lourdes.cubillas@up.edu.ph.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL A. RODRIGUEZ**
Vice-President for Development

(PDI - Aug 3 4 & 5 2002)

INTER-ISLAND GAS SERVICE INC. (IIGSI)

IIGSI, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Manila Gas Corporation (MGC), is inviting offers for the negotiated sale of its real estate property in Barangay Opao, Mandaue City, Cebu. The property consists of two (2) parcels of land with a total area of 11,657 sqm. The indicative price of the property is P15 Million.

The sale of the above property shall be strictly on CASH AS-IS WHERE-IS BASIS.

IIGSI reserves the right to reject any or all offers, waive any of the formalities required, or to accept only such offers at a mutually acceptable price and terms most advantageous to IIGSI, subject to the approval of the IIGSI and MGC Boards and the Privatization Council.

Interested parties may submit their sealed offers from **August 5-23, 2002** to the Bids Committee, 1536 Paz Guazon Street, Paco, Manila. All offers must be accompanied by a bond in the form of cashier's check or manager's check from a major commercial bank payable and acceptable to IIGSI in an amount equivalent to at least ten percent (10%) of the offer. All offers will be opened by the Bids Committee at 2:00 p.m. on August 16, 2002. The offer letter may be secured from IIGSI c/o Glen Sadian, Tel. No. 564-1781; Fax No. 563-9388.

Republic of the Philippines
Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
Province of Maguindanao
Municipality of Pagagawan

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

August 5, 2002

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP). It is intended that part of the proceeds under contract for rural infrastructure component for which this invitation is issued.
2. The Local Government Unit (LGU) of Pagagawan, Maguindanao as implementing partner of DAR for ARCP, invite prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and if eligible, to bid for the **CONCRETING OF TUNGGOL FARM TO MARKET ROAD.**
3. Eligibility statement forms and bidding documents may be secured by interested bidders at the Office of the Chairman, Bid and Award Committee (BAC) upon payment of non-refundable fee of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (Php 5,000) per set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Submission of application for eligibility must be received in sealed envelopes on or before **August 26, 2002**, addressed to: The Chairman, Bid and Award Committee, Municipality of Pagagawan.
5. A Pre-bid Conference shall be held on **September 3, 2002** at the Municipal Hall of Pagagawan, Office of the Chairman, Bid and Award Committee.
6. The submission and opening of bids will be on **September 10, 2002** at the Municipal Hall of Pagagawan. Late bids will not be accepted. The bid shall be accompanied by Bid Security of 2.5% of the approved budget cost or its equivalent and to be posted in favor of the LGU. The bid security shall be valid for 120 days.
7. The approved budget is **EIGHT MILLION FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED TWENTY PESOS AND FOURTEEN (Php 8,520,220.14) CTVS.**
8. The Category/Classification of Contractors/Firm is "MEDIUM A".
9. The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect of formality assume no obligations whatsoever of indemnify to the bidder for any expense or loss that may incurred in the preparation of bid and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Government. The provision of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations as amended August 2000, shall apply to this invitation.

(Sgd.) **BAI ANNIE C. MONTAWAL**
Mayor
Chairman, Bid and Award Committee

(PDI – Aug. 5, 9 & 14, 2002)

NOTICE is given in the loss of a **Vinebel Realties, Inc.** Stock Certificate No. 006 issued in the name of **THE HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANK** dated February 9, 1987 for 899,999 shares. If no adverse claim is received, a new certificate will be issued.

(PDI – Jul. 22, 29 & Aug. 5, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given for the loss of Three (3) booklets of PROVISIONAL RECEIPTS last **July 29, 2002**, with series names and numbers:

GE - 2951 - 3000,
CYA - 2952 - 3000 and
FABRIANO - 9716 - 9750

Owned by CYA Industries Inc.
Note:
The above receipts are not consumed.

WANTED FOR EMPLOYMENT IN SAIPAN, CNMI
Accreditation No. 63032-5

ACCOUNTANTS

Male/Female, 3-5 years of work experience, 35 years above need not apply, single preferred, experience in the preparation of financial statement, inventory work, projection and analysis.

NURSES

Male/Female, single/married, CGFNS passer only and at least 5 years work experience.

BAKERS

Male only, 2-3 years work experience, with cake decorating background and knowledge in making pastries.

Interested applicants: Please apply and bring resumé with detailed job description, 1 - 2x2 photo, certificate of employment and other credentials to back-up your qualifications to:

PARAS ENTERPRISES
1736-A Dian Street near Buendia Avenue, Makati City

FOR MANPOWER POOLING ONLY • NO FEES TO BE COLLECTED • "MAG-INGAT SA MGA ILLEGAL RECRUITERS"

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
GENCO 6

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID G6-2002-007

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-GENCO 6 invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

SCHEDULE		ITEM/DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER
		DATE OF BIDDING: SEPTEMBER 12, 2002; 10:00 am	
A1	1 LOT	WORK ORDER: REHAB OF SUCTION PIT STRAINERS OF COLD BASIN, TIWI AB & C	3TIW-02-0017A
		DATE OF BIDDING: SEPTEMBER 12, 2002; 2:00 PM	
A2	1 LOT	WORK ORDER: COST OF LABOR AND MATERIALS IN THE REPAIR/ RECONDITIONING OF ISOLATION VALVE OF TIWI AB & C	3TIW-02-0023
		DATE OF BIDDING: SEPTEMBER 13, 2002; 10:00 AM	
B1	70 SETS 1 REEL	TENSION/SUSPENSION INSULATOR OVERHEAD GROUND WIRE HIGH STRENGTH GRADE: 5,000 FT/REEL, 3/8 OR 7/16 WITH INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING	3TIW-02-0065
B2	1 SET	ONE (1) INCH DRIVE AIR IMPACT WRENCHES, WITH COMPLETE SOCKET SIZE AND HOSE	3INGP02-0022
B3	1 SET	AIR COMPRESSOR, RECIPROCATING MOTOR DRIVEN, 10 HP PORTABLE	3INGP02-0023

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules on:

1) A1 - **AUGUST 28, 2002**; 9:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room
2) A2 - **AUGUST 28, 2002**; 10:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room
3) B1 - **AUGUST 28, 2002**; 11:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from Procurement, Traffic and Warehousing Services (PTWS) Section, Administration Division, GENCO 6, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P50.00 starting **August 6, 2002**. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the SLRC Bidding Room, NPC-SLRC, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with "Executive Order 40".

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC-GENCO 6 reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) R.H. HERRERA
Chairman, BAC

(PDI -- Aug. 5 & 13, 2002)

AUCTION

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OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Single & Double Pedestal Wooden Office Tables; Pedestal Drawers, Wooden Work Surfaces; Filing Cabinets; Office Partition; Cash Register Machines; Photocopiers, Printers; Computers, etc.
IMPORTED HOME FURNISHINGS - (3)-Piece Leather/Fabric Upholstered Sofa Sets; (9)-Piece Rattan Sofa Set; Reclining Sofa, Wooden & Rattan King Size Bed, Wooden Entertainment Center; Wooden Cabinets; Collapsible Rackings
HOUSEHOLD GOODS - 29"/21" KOLIN Television Sets; Washing Machines; Electric & Gas Stoves, Microwave 0Ovens; Electric Fan; Floor Polisher, Lamp Stands; Cooking Utensils; Cutlery, Wine Glasses, Dinnerware, etc.
MISCELLANEOUS & SCRAPS - Large Qty Of Used Clothes; Scrap Television Sets; Cassette Players; Tire Rims; Screws; Vulcanizing Equipment, Engines; Pull-down Door Assy; Airconditioners, Insulation; etc.

AT: HENRY BUTCHER AUCTION CENTER
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ON VIEW: WEDNESDAY 7TH AUGUST 2002,
9:00AM - 5:00PM & MORNING OF SALE DAY
REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT: Php20,000.00 (Upon Registration)

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Bureau of Agricultural Research
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
E-mail: rd@bar.gov.ph website: www.bar.gov.ph
Tel. Nos. 920-0219; 928-8505 loc. 141 & 142

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) invites contractors classified and registered with the IAC on Registration and Classification of Contractor's to apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the Renovation/upgrading of UPLB-Institute of Plant Breeding R & D Facilities for Varietal Improvement (Phase I):

- I. Renovation and upgrading of the UPLB-IPB Specialized Laboratory Building and Seminar Room:
  1. Renovation, repair and retrofitting of the UPLB-IPB Specialized Laboratory Building and Seminar Room; and
  2. Extension/Expansion of the IPB Specialized Laboratory Building and Construction of a Generator House
- II. Renovation of the UPLB-IPB Seed Storage Facility.

Contractor Classification: Medium A with Electrical Specialty for building and with PCAB license
Cost of Bid Document: P2,500
Deadline for Submission of Letter of Intent: August 13, 2002

The proposed work to be undertaken shall include the furnishing of Labor, Materials and Equipment necessary to complete the project.

Contractors may obtain the Eligibility Statement Form and Bid Document from DA-BAR after presentation of Letter of Intent and Letter of Authority if filed by Firm's agent, together with the original of the approved renewal of PCAB License and IAC Registration and Classification and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php 2,500.00.

Attention is invited to interested Bidders on the Pre-bidding schedule to be undertaken at the BAC Conference Room located at Second Floor, ATI., Quezon City.

1. Pre-Bid Conference .... **August 15, 2002**
2. Deadline of Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Forms .... **August 16, 2002**
3. Submission of Bids .... **August 26, 2002** (up to 2:00 p.m.)
4. Opening of Bids .... **August 26, 2002** (2:00 p.m.)

Submission, Opening, and Abstracting of Bid, Submit in two (2) envelopes with the name of the project to be bid and the name of the bidder in capital letters addressed to the BAC. For particulars, please contact: Mr. Rolando V. Labios or Mr. Angel S. Morcozo, Jr. at Tel. No. **920-0219** or **928-8505** loc. **141** and **142.**

All particulars relative to the Pre-qualification, Bid Bond, Bank Statement/Deposit, Performance Bond, Bid Evaluation and award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended and other relevant laws and rules.

The Bureau reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids and waive any informality in the bid proposals received or to accept such as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the government.

Approved:

(Sgd.) **ELISEO R. PONCE**
Director

(PDI - Aug. 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

MOHRI & P.A. Associates, Inc.

Second Floor Casmer Building, 195 Salcedo Street
Legazpi Village, Makati City

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Supply and Delivery of Utility Vehicles
(IFB No. Mohri-01/2002)

TO ALL ELIGIBLE BIDDERS:

1. The Mohri & P.A. Associates, Inc., now invites sealed bids from eligible suppliers who are in the business of supply and delivery of 9 units of utility vehicles.
2. The Mohri & P.A. Associates, Inc., a corporation duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), hereinafter referred to as "Mohri," is a consulting services contractor of the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) of the Department of Education. TEEP is a project funded by the Philippine Government with loans from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) of the World Bank.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Mohri P.A. and Associates with offices at Second Floor, Casmer Building, 195 Salcedo Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City with telephone nos. (02) 892-4609 or 892-4611; Fax No. (02) 892-4605 or 894-5827. A complete set of bidding documents maybe obtained from said office starting **August 7, 2002**, upon submission of a letter of intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (PhP 500.00).
4. Bids must be submitted to the Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee on the opening of bids to be held at the TEEP Conference Room, Fifth Floor, Bonifacio Building, Department of Education, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, on **September 10, 2002** at 10:00 AM. Deadline for submission of bids is at 10:00 AM on **September 10, 2002**. Bids must be accompanied with a bid security of two (2) percent of total bid price. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will be held on Thursday, **August 22, 2002**, at 10:00 AM the TEEP Conference Room, Fifth Floor, Bonifacio Building, Department of Education, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City.

ARCH. TITO MOISES S. ENCINAS
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Aug. 5, 2002)

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PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED BANGKO RURAL NG MINALABAC (Camarines Sur), INC. (BRMI)

1. Starting August 6, 2002, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed **Bangko Rural ng Minalabac (Camarines Sur), Inc.**
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the designated payoff sites on the dates indicated in the table below. Receiving and processing of claims are scheduled from Monday to Friday during office hours.

BRMI Office/ Branch	Payoff Site	Duration of Payoff
Minalabac, Head Office	*BRMI – Minalabac, Head Office* *San Francisco, Minalabac* *Camarines Sur*	August 6 to 13, 2002
Sipocot Branch	*BRMI – Sipocot Branch* *Poblacion, Sipocot* *Camarines Sur*	August 6 to 21, 2002

After the said dates, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or by mail addressed to –

The Manager
Claims Processing Department
Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
2228 Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City

3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook, Certificate of Time Deposit or latest bank statement and unused check; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Bangko Rural ng Minalabac (Camarines Sur), Inc. is on **December 23, 2003.** After **December 23, 2003**, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI – August 5 & 6, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and bid for the selection of proponents for the short- or long-term lease of the

Univesity of the Philippines
Property at Barrio Cupang, Muntinlupa City

The University of the Philippines invites proponents to bid for the lease of its property, consisting of three (3) contiguous parcels of land with a total area of approximately 38,943 sq.m., located at No. 5 Kilometer 20, East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway, Bo. Cupang, Muntinlupa City.

The said property is suitable for commercial/industrial development because of its strategic location. Inasmuch as the site is not a part of the academic or academic support zone of any campus of the University of the Philippines System, and thus is not suitable for academic use, there are no restrictions in continuing the utilization of the property for commercial and/or industrial purposes.

Prequalification forms and Terms of Reference (TOR) may be obtained from the UP System Prequalification Bids and Awards Committee (UPS-PBAC) Secretariat, Office of the Vice-President for Development, Basement, Quezon Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 from **August 12** to **16, 2002**. Deadline of submission of duly accomplished prequalification documents will be on **August 30, 2002**. After the evaluation of the documents submitted, the prequalified developers shall be duly notified of the schedule of subsequent activities. For inquiries, please call Tel. No. **920-5301** to **99** loc. **4202**; or Tel/Fax No. **928-2665** (c/o Mr. Antonio J. Bejasa); E-mail: edmundo.camello@up.edu.ph.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL A. RODRIGUEZ**
Vice-President for Development

(PDI - Aug. 3, 4 & 5, 2002)

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ROSA GUEVARA GERODIAS

Of San Pedro, Laguna and So. San Francisco, CA, USA

Peacefully joined our Creator on August 3, 2002
at the age of 77.

Her bereaved husband **MELCHOR**;
children, in-laws and grandchildren
NOEL & Marissa Muyot, Jardine, Jenise, Jill, Jenilee & Gabe,
VANJEAN & Oscar Cayetano, Nate Gerodias & Nana
MINDA & Bert Luistro, Leah & Lesley
MEJUL & Jean- Marie Weckerle, Marie- Julie & Celine
AMY & Mario Suarez, Miko & Nikki
BOY & Annie Pili, Alex & Nikolo
BABY & Bube Rabuy & Berna
RAUL & Becky Santos, Nina, Gino & Jerico
IMELDA & Jojo Carrillo, Andrea & Amanda
EDGEE & Malou Almendrala;
sisters **MILAGROS MACHADO, AURORA LOPEZ,**
JOSEFINA CARIÑO,
brothers **BIENVENIDO** (+) & **PRIMO** (+),
brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces,
other relatives and friends request the pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de San Francisco,
Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City.
Mass will be offered on Tuesday, August 6, 2002 at 10:00 AM
after which the body will be transferred to
San Pedro Parish Church in San Pedro, Laguna.

Interment will be on Thursday, August 8, 2002 at
the Southern Cross Memorial Park in Magsaysay Road,
San Pedro, Laguna after the 10:00 AM Mass.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is my strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?"

Psalm 27:1

Our Dearly Beloved

AMPARO SOTELO ANGELES

Peacefully joined our Lord on August 3, 2002
at the age of 79.

Her loving children **Edgar**, **Jorge** and **Utchie**, **Rei** and **Lolit**, **Virgilio Jr.** and **Nimfa** (+), **Franco** and **Luz**, **Ampy**, **Winnie**, **Germaine** and **Renzo**; grandchildren **Maricel** and **Alex**, **Peewee**, **Ginny**, **Nikki**, **Lanie**, **Angel**, **Paolo**, **Francis**, **Carlos**, **BJ** and **Nina**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Don Bosco Chapels, Makati City.

Interment will be at the La Loma Cemetery, Manila. Date will be announced at a later time.

In Loving Memory

of the **First Death Anniversary** of

ERNESTO M. RAPINAN JR.

September 28, 1936 - August 5, 2001

His loving wife **Dr. Elma Fellores-Rapinan**; sons **Ronnie, Rey, Ramon, Rhandy, Romano, Rhuel & Robert**; daughters-in-law and grandchildren request relatives, friends, and pious readers to include **"ERNIE"** in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered today, August 5, 2002 at:

St. Joseph Cathedral, Alaminos City, Pangasinan	5:00 AM
Immaculate Concepcion Church, Cubao, Q.C.	6:00 PM
Shrine of St. Joseph Church, Aurora Bouleyard, Q.C.	6:00 PM
Sta. Cruz Church, Sta. Cruz, Manila	6:30 AM
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene, Quiapo	6:00 PM
Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo	12:15 PM
Divine Savior Parish Church, North Fairview, Q.C.	6:00 PM
St. Martin of Tours Church, Dumalag, Capiz	5:00 AM

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

Our Dearly Beloved Mamang

Demetria "Metring" Parayno-Estrada

Now peacefully rests in the Infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 3rd day of August 2002 at the age of 89.

In memory of her loving husband **Dr. Jaime E. Estrada** (+); children and children-in-law **Cora** and **Mael**, **Merlo** and **Paz**, **Lorna** and **Rem**, **Rey** and **Carrie**, **Fer** and **Nancy**, **Lilly** and **Dante**, and **Jimmy** and **Rhez**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, beloved brothers and sisters, other relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Anthony de Abott Chapel at Town & Country Executive Village, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City and will be later moved to her residence at Calasiao, Pangasinan on Wednesday, August 7, 2002 at 12:00 noon.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 11, 2002 at the Calasiao Catholic Cemetery, Calasiao, Pangasinan.

"For it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

TRINIDAD DULAY ARIGO

Peacefully joined her Creator
on August 2, 2002 at the age of 93.

Her loving children **Jose Jr.**, **Manuel**, **Bishop Pedro**, **Alfonso**, **Teresita**, **Eugenio**, **Francisco**, **Rafael** and **Roberto**; daughters and son-in-law, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at 250 Pag-asa, Saradpon Subdivision, Imus, Cavite.

Interment will be on August 9, 2002 at Doña Gregoria Cemetery, Wakas, Kawit, Cavite after the 2:30 PM Mass at St. Mary Magdalene Parish.

Please omit flowers.

"For it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

DR. JUSTO B. LUKBAN

Chairman, Board of Trustee
Mabini College
Daet, Camarines Norte

Peacefully joined his Creator on August 1, 2002
at the age of 82.

His loving wife **Manuela**; children **Miguel**, **Manuel**, **Marcel**, **Jovita**, **Julita**, **Mansuc**, **Moises**, **Judith** and **Josefa**; grandchildren, other relatives and friends request all reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in Holy Trinity Cathedral Gahonon, Daet, Camarines Norte.

Interment will be on August 5, 2002 at Daet Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Cathedral.

In Loving Memory
on the First Death Anniversary of

CAPT. FERMORE D. OGOC JR.
0-12203, PA, AFP

Who passed away on August 6, 2001.

Masses will be offered Tuesday, August 6, 2002 at the following:

ISK Seminary Chapel, Pala-o, Iligan City	6:00 AM
Redemptorist Church, Iligan City	6:00 AM
Corpus Christi Church, Iligan City	6:00 AM
St. Michael Parish Church, Iligan City	5:30 PM
St. Francis de Assisi Parish Church, Siquijor, Siquijor	6:00 AM
San Roque Parish Church, Banban, Siquijor, Siquijor	6:00 AM
Sta. Monica Parish Church, Banlugan, Dalaquete, Cebu	6:00 AM
Redemptorist Church, Cebu City	5:30 PM

The family requests relatives, friends, and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

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Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
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Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855; 682-0209; 682-0210
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Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
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Storage area networks make virtual disk space possible

By Gerry Plaza
INQ7.net

IMAGINE finding and accessing storage resources around the world with a simple click on a webpage.

With the emergence of storage area networks (SANs), where storage resources across the enterprise are consolidated and networked, users need not worry about storing, protecting and accessing valuable data. As more and more enterprise networks embrace SAN technology, storage vendors have since introduced the concept of virtualization, or the pooling of physical storage from multiple network storage devices into what appears to be a single storage device that is managed from a central console.

In a SAN, the "virtualized" storage device appears as one storage device to the operating system, regardless of storage device type. Among the wide range of storage devices, hard disk drives are most commonly used.

Virtualization is akin to a redundant array of independent disks (RAID) although stored data is not replicated redundantly on each storage device. The technology allows users to add storage devices without any downtime, assign storage volumes to and from devices or servers across the network, mix hard drives regardless of size, speeds, or manufacturer, and easily create, delete, or expand virtual drives.

Data availability, integrity, and storage are enhanced with 24x7 data access, a stringent requirement for global firms, wherein the amount of storage space needed for critical data is expected to double annually. Virtualization achieves this without increasing administrative burden.

Businesses frequently install new servers and storage devices to handle increased traffic and data volume in specific locations on an "as-needed" basis. While this approach addresses immediate needs for additional storage, it also increases the number of individual devices to manage and introduces new problems such as inefficient utilization of resources. For example, one disk array might have more than sufficient capacity to support storage needs, but without a way to share the excess capacity, the resources go unused.

Storage virtualization solves this problem by managing all available storage as a single pool from which capacity can be allocated, reallocated, or added as required. So, excess storage capacity can be used by the applications that need it. And as storage needs change, allocation can be changed as well.

Leading systems and storage vendor Hewlett-Packard dedicated a focused strategy on virtualization as a key technology for its storage product roll-out. It focuses on two primary elements: increasing storage efficiency by optimizing the way storage is used and the importance of the combined role that management and virtualization play within storage architectures. When customers fuse management with virtualization, they are then free to use storage from multiple vendors and manage complex storage environments through one "pane of glass."

The strategy also emphasizes HP's ongoing efforts to develop its investment in fabric-based storage appliances, which complement existing array-based virtualization technology.

The HP StorageApps SV3000 appliance enables customers to pool, view and manage legacy and newly added physical storage resources from different vendors and then share those resources across different servers. Customers may scale their storage, upgrade functions and add services as needed.

The StorageApps sv3000 represents HP's first-ever entry-level storage network appliance. With 2Gb/s Fiber Channel connectivity and 14 unswitched FC ports, the StorageApps sv3000 offers storage virtualization with Fibre Channel data replication, LUN mapping security, and built-in support for multiple operating systems and HP disk arrays.

The StorageApps sv3000 offers flexible upgrade options that include IP data replication, point-in-time imaging, support for heterogeneous disk systems and a variety of services.

As part of its recent merger with Compaq, HP is offering Virtual Replicator, enabling server-based virtualization, wherein users can pool physical storage and create large-size virtual disks tailored to the requirements of their production environment. Virtual disk space can be allocated as needed, allowing customers to respond quickly to changing storage capacity requirements. Through virtualization, online volume growth, snapshot and management features, the software complements the standard capabilities within the operating system. By utilizing industry-standard server, storage and network-interconnect components, an organization's current and future storage investments are protected.

Virtual Replicator provides the ability to create instant, virtual replicas or snapshots of production data—without having to physically copy it. A snapshot, which looks exactly like the original disk from which it was derived, takes seconds to create and allows customers to perform backups and restores with minimal impact to users and applications. Customers can schedule automated snapshot backups using the integrated policy-based scheduling and scripting features.

Politically motivated virus attacks Pakistan

By Joel D. Pinaroc

A POLITICALLY motivated virus has attacked the website of the government of Pakistan, anti-virus firm Sophos said in its monthly Top 10 viruses and hoaxes report.

According to the UK-based anti-virus firm, the virus W32/Yaha-E, which is in the top 3 virus list, "came to prominence as a politically motivated virus, launching a rudimentary denial of service attack on the Pakistan government's website and encouraging Indian hackers and virus writers to join forces and attack Pakistan."

Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos, said the virus uses a "simple psychological trick" to entice users to open their e-mail. The e-mail message usually comes with the subject "Re: Your password."

"The worm is contained in an attached EXE file. Blocking unwanted file types at the gateway would deal with these viruses," said Cluley.

Sophos said the virus W32/Klez-H is currently at No. 1 followed by W32/Frethem-Fam in second and W32/Yaha-E in third. All three are classified as "worm" viruses.

A worm virus self-replicates, sometimes not affecting computer files but residing in the computer's memory. An explosion of these "replicants" sometimes causes problems for the user because the worm will use the resources of the infected computer, resulting in a system crash.

Sophos also reported that 810 new viruses were discovered last month, bringing the total number of viruses the firm has discovered and identified to a staggering 75,281.

In its Top 10 hoaxes list, meanwhile, Sophos reported that the "JDBGMGR" hoax tops the list followed by "Hotmail hoax" and the "a virtual card for you" hoax. A hoax called "Bill Gates Fortune" came in at fourth, Sophos reported.

Although less destructive than viruses, hoaxes can clog up e-mail bandwidth, sometimes disrupting e-mail services.

Sophos said one way of stopping the proliferation of hoaxes is for users to avoid sending or forwarding these hoaxes, or warnings, to others.

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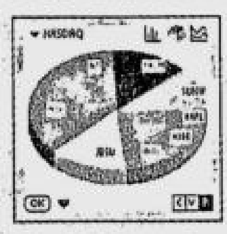

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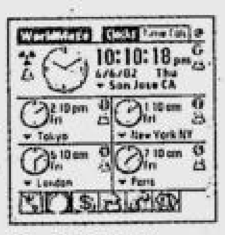

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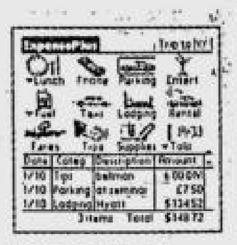

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Nba Live 2002 scores and then misses

By Weng Obligacion

BY THE TIME you read this piece, the Los Angeles Lakers should be finished celebrating their third straight world championship as they go for four in November; Yao Ming already secured a multimillion-dollar deal with the Houston Rockets; and NBA Live 2002 fans are looking forward to a better version next year.

Not a few gamers had huge expectations when NBA Live 2002, one of the latest basketball video games by Electronic Arts for the Microsoft Xbox. The game was released November last year, and the expectations of gamers were not completely fulfilled.

NBA Live 2002, which was initially sold for $49.99 in the United States and roughly P3,000 in Manila, brings to the Xbox images of the world's best cagers executing their trademark moves, highlight dunks and unique shooting strokes in a game where a maximum of four gamers can play at the same time.

While there are many reports of disappointment by Xbox users and game reviewers around the world, NBA Live 2002 has decent features which are enough to whet the appetite of the basketball console game junkie. For now, it seems.

Since it was founded in 1982, Electronic Arts (EA) Sports has been developing, publishing and distributing sports video games for personal computers and game consoles. The features of NBA Live 2002 are basically the same with its predecessors, with some minor changes.

For gamers who crave for similarities between their NBA idols and their videogame counterparts, Live '02 provides drastic visual improvements where a player's accessories—from knee pads and braces, arm and head bands, sock lengths and shoes among others—would be easily recognized. Live '02 tried hard but failed in many instances to implement an inside game among the NBA's premier big men. If you're a Shaquille O'Neal or a Tim Duncan fan, this video game's focus on improving the play around the basket with various post moves and an expanded shot selection leaves so much to be desired.

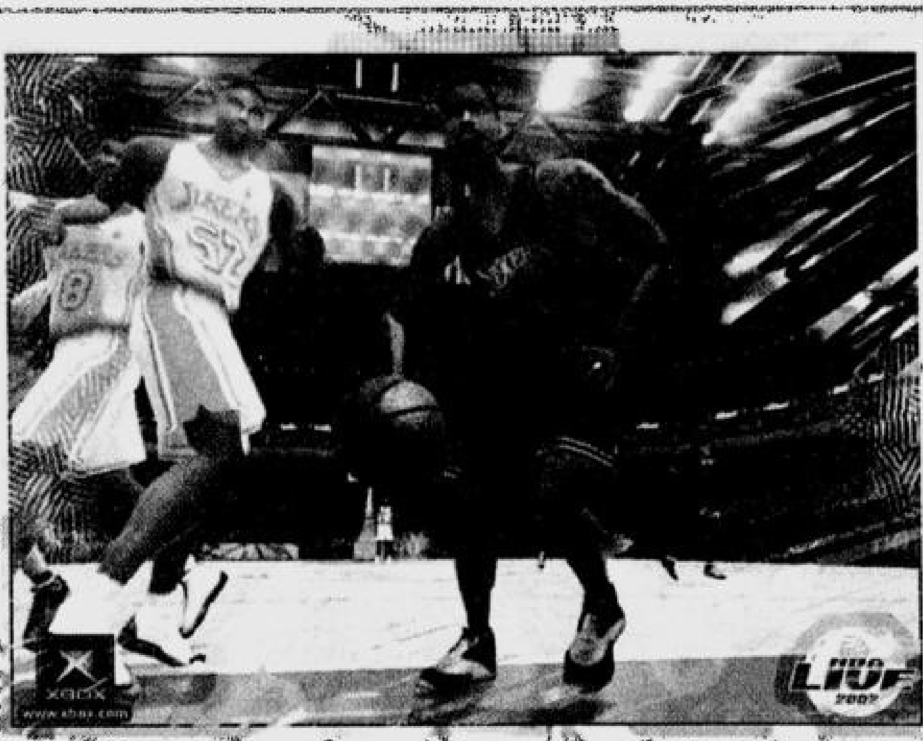
As far as a player's shooting stroke is concerned, Live '02 failed to imitate some of the game's best clutch shooters. For instance, Indiana Pacers guard Reggie Miller's smirk and quick-shooting stroke with hand on his face does not jibe with his Xbox counterpart. But an amusing feature here would be the transition sequences focusing on player-player and player-referee interaction. Not that I'm delighted to see the likes of Shaq getting technicals left and right, but Live '02 does a good job imitating a player's reactions to every foul called by the referee—without the Ts, of course.

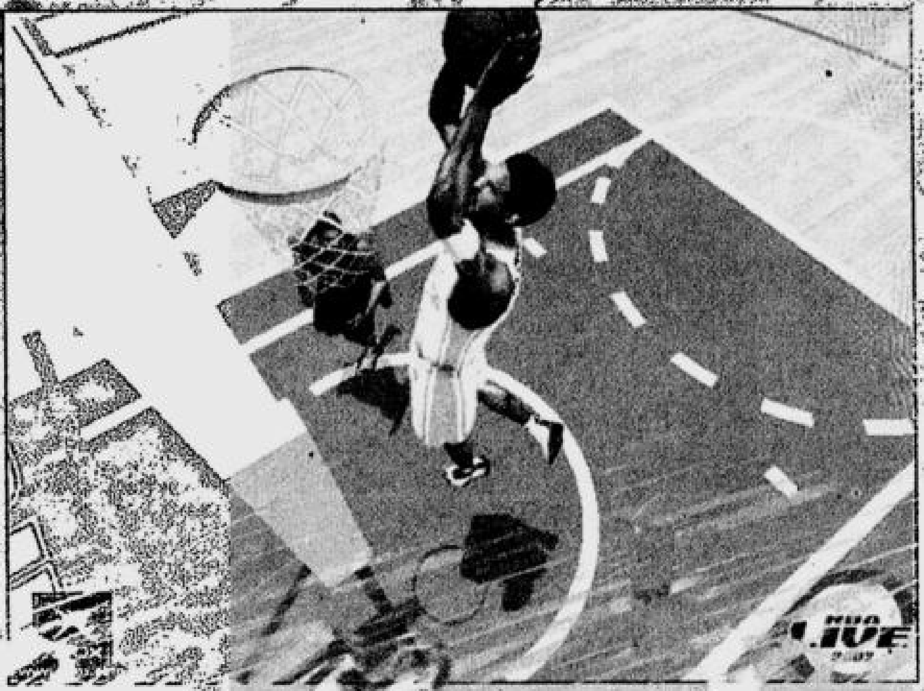
XBOX

We review this game on the XBox

The emotion of the players also heighten a gamer's satisfaction. Temperamental players like Kobe Bryant, Allen Iverson and Shaq himself react tremendously to a rim-rattling slam that would surely boost a gamer's momentum in a heated battle.

If your player—most likely rookies for the 2001-02 season—is not among the roster of the 28 teams, Live '02 has a "Create a Player" mode where you can imitate your idol's body, frame, hair, jersey number and color of skin, among others. For Yao Ming fans, here's a chance to insert the Chinese top overall pick and let him battle against a heavyweight like Shaq.





Another cool feature in this game would be the variety of dunks a player can execute. Over 30 new rim-rattling slams complement the facial and player animations in Live '02, from Kobe's 360-degree dunk to Vince Carter's monster slams off a fastbreak.

The graphics may have sharp edges and the power of the Xbox is not exploited by this game, but Live '02 also deserves some credit for showing high-flying dunks at its best.

For the discriminating gamer, Live '02 can be played in five ways, namely the Exhibition, Season, Playoffs, Franchise and One-on-One modes. The Exhibition mode is a classic format where a minimum of two players can choose their respective teams and play for the length of time they prefer. Choose from the minimum two minutes per quarter to the maximum of 48 minutes, or the typical NBA game length. If you're alone with your Xbox and want to spend countless hours, the Season mode is fit for you. You can also choose from half of the season (41 games) to the full 82-game route.

An early warning, though. A gamer must learn how to pace his key players in Season mode because other factors, like injuries and fatigue, will show in the wear-and-tear of the season schedule. Or you can press the "off" button in the injuries and fatigue section found in the options menu. Additionally, the Season mode allows you to tour the home-courts of the remaining 28 teams because most of your team's games will be played on the road. This is your chance to scrutinize the playing floors of the LA Lakers, Sacramento Kings and the Boston Celtics, among others.

If you want to be tested by the league's heavyweights early, the Playoffs mode is for you. You can choose the length of every series you want to play, from the shorter 1-1-1-1 format to the NBA-length 5-7-7-7 route to the world championship. Just like the real NBA, however, you cannot make player additions in Playoffs mode. This is where the Xbox's hard drive memory comes into play because you can insert a certain player in your team's lineup, load them for Playoffs mode and then play with a distinct advantage. Imagine inserting Tim Duncan as Shaq's frontline partner in the Lakers' playoff roster. Or Iverson combining with Kobe in the L.A. backcourt. The possibilities are endless.

The Franchise mode allows the gamer to assemble a totally new team. Finally, the One-on-One mode is played in a street-basketball-like atmosphere where the players wear practice jerseys and shorts. A stretch of a gamer's imagination can come to reality in the One-on-One mode. From the classic Kobe-Iverson match-up to Jordan vs Bryant and Shaq vs Duncan.

Since this game also has an Eastern and Western Conference selection aside from the 29 regular teams, Live '02 also features a Legends squad spanning from the '50s up to the '90s. So for those who want to stop the debate whether Michael Jordan is better than Wilt Chamberlain, here is your chance to

SCORES/p. B19

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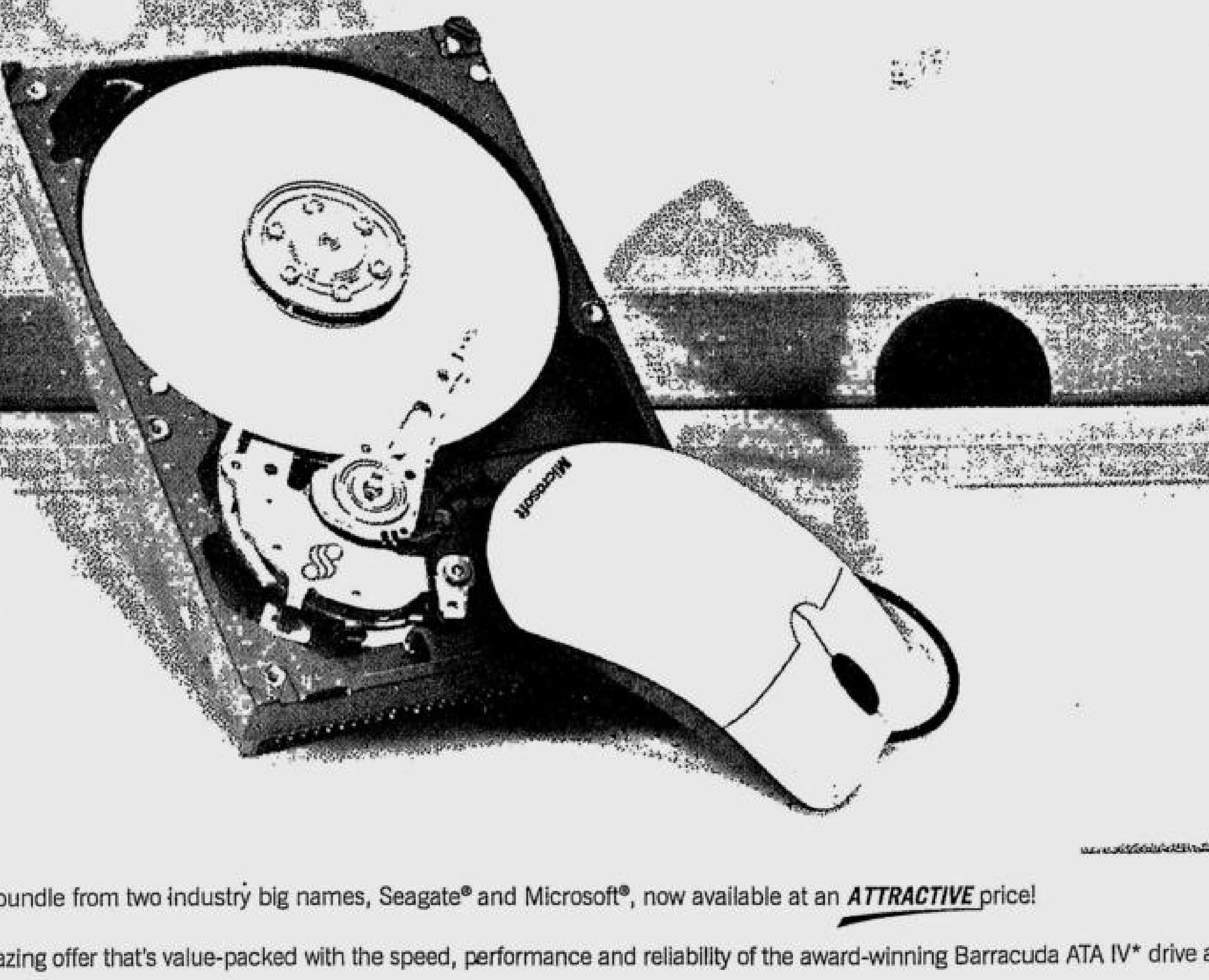

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Seagate

Scores and then misses

From p. B18

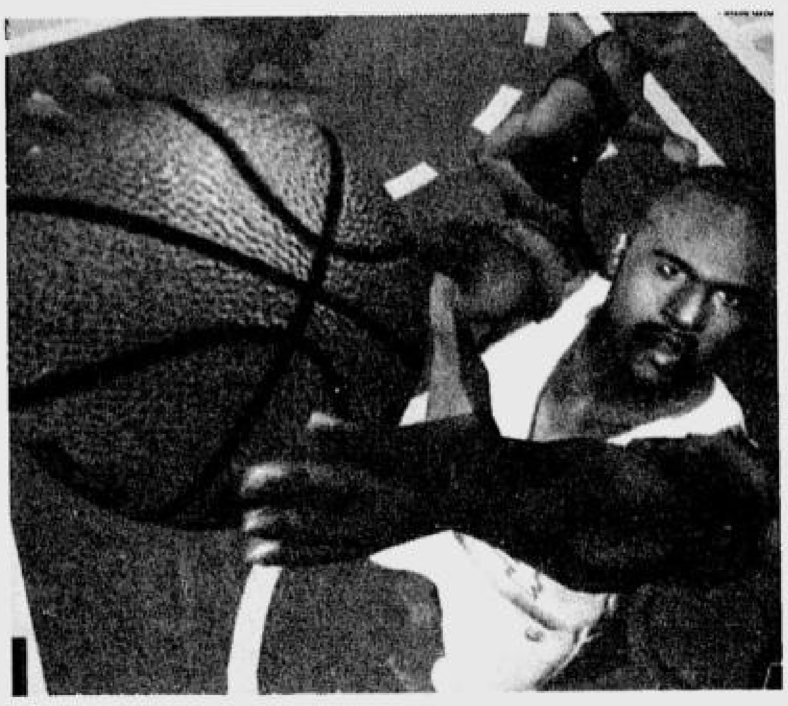
prove it through the One-on-One mode.

Additionally, the Legends teams of the '50s up to the '90s can compete against the regular NBA teams under the exhibition mode. Now you can see Shaq powering his way against greats like Wilt and Bill Russell. That would be a treat!

This is one area Live '02 has the edge, at least in my opinion. With the Xbox controller, a gamer can easily adapt to the player controls after a few games with its simplicity.

There are three basic buttons to remember when you're on the offensive side—shoot, pass and the crossover. For defense, there are four, namely, the rebound/block, steal, push and change player buttons.

Another unique button for Live '02 for the Xbox is the white button, where the gamer on the offensive side lets a player execute an alley-oop by passing the ball to a teammate nearest to the basket. Timing is also important before the gamer becomes trigger-happy in pressing that white button. Let me note that not all alley-oop tries are executed perfectly. A Kobe-to-Shaq "combo" can also be defended by the opposing team by timing his defensive player's jump to the player accepting the pass on the offensive side.



Game rules can be adjusted according to the gamer's preference, from the standard NBA-type to the amateur rules format and even the "everything-goes" ballgame. Such format would mean a player shooting a 3-pointer even if he steps on the sidelines, a player not fouling out and no traveling violations.

If you're a hard-core basketball console game fan, NBA Live 2002 is worth playing for, at least in the first few times trying it. But the replay value is not high compared to games like Dead or Alive or any RPG (role-playing-game) type of games.

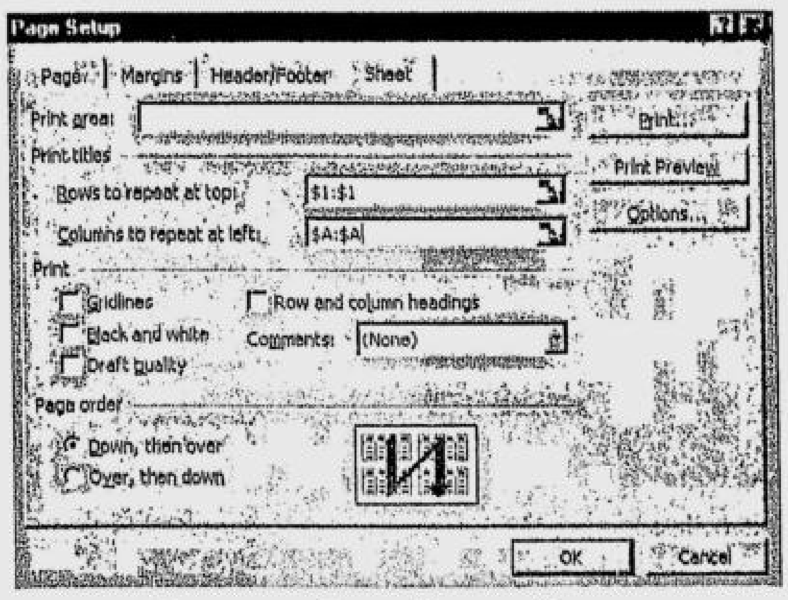
For keeping in pace with the Xbox's opening to the world market and gain the distinction of being one of the first games available on Microsoft's gaming console, Live '02 rushed the construction of its graphics as far as player images and court arenas are concerned. But this game should be given a thumbs up for effort alone.

Ranged against other NBA console games—Microsoft Game Studios' NBA Inside Drive 2002 (Xbox), Sega Sports' NBA 2K2 (Xbox, Gamecube and Playstation 2) and Gamecube versions of NBA Courtside 2002 and NBA Street—Live '02 will have its hands full in pleasing the basketball gamer's fancy.

This early, these same gamers are eagerly awaiting the release of NBA Inside Drive 2003 this October and the NBA 2k3 during the Fall season in the US. Chances are NBA Live will also come up with its 2003 version much earlier than expected since the real-life NBA season begins in November.

A consolation Live '02 creators might get are the other negative features of their competitors. NBA Inside Drive 2002, for one, also has its faults on player graphics and signature moves. The PS2's version of NBA 2k2 gets flak for letting gamers struggle thoroughly when shooting free throws (you have to experience this to believe it).

Compared to its predecessors like the Live '98 and '99 versions among others, Live '02 does not hold a candle in terms of graphics and playability. But if you have the craving for challenges and the versatility to play different NBA console games, then Live '02 can also be worth your time.



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Repeating headings on Excel printed pages

POWERTIPS

By Jerry Liao

WHEN you're printing a large worksheet, you won't see the column or row headings as multiple pages are printed. To repeat the headings on all printed pages, follow these simple steps:

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Focus on Sony VX20000 Digital CamRecorder

THE BOTTOM LINE

By Jerry Liao

THIS week we take a look at Sony's advanced digital camera product for high-performance, professional jobs.

Strengths

1) 5.75 x 4.63 x 13.5 inches, weighs 3.44 lbs. with battery and media, uses MiniDV cassette and memory stick.

2) Three-CCD, improved low-light performance, color viewfinder with higher resolution, a smoother zoom motor, a foldout 2 1/2-inch plasma LCD screen, and a manual zoom ring.

3) 12x optical/48x digital zoom, 380,000 pixels sensor resolution, 530 horizontal resolution, 16:9 wide-screen recording.

4) 58mm UV or Daylight for lens protection, built-in effects, slow motion, digital still picture, PictureGear 4.1 Lite Software.

Weaknesses

1) Still image resolution is still 640x480. Dedicated still camera has better image quality.

2) Focus ring doesn't override autofocus.

The Bottom Line

The Sony DCR VX20000 is an advanced three-chip CCD camera designed to meet the demands of the high-performance digital video camera user. It is packed with several unique features, durable and easy to use and provides high-quality video and audio capture.

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ERRING COMPANIES BEWARE

Consumers, time to know your rights

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FROM caveat emptor to caveat venditor.

The Department of Trade and Industry is moving to shift the responsibility of ensuring the protection of consumers to corporations and enterprises in the face of growing consumer activism in the country.

Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. says that for a long time, consumers have to carry the burden of ensuring that they get what they pay for from vendors.

"It's always been that buyers should always beware in making their purchases. I think this is terribly unfair because it demands that consumers know what they are getting. Corporations are also duty-bound to ensure that their products pass quality standards or their services live up to their promises before they go to the market," Cristobal says.

This is why, as part of the DTI's intensified campaign to promote consumer activism in the country, the DTI-Bureau of Product Standards has stepped up the monitoring of products sold in the market.

He says government watchdogs tasked to regulate specific products or services should likewise ensure that companies comply with industry standards and commitments.

Quality products

By ensuring that corporations sell quality products or service-providers live up to their agreements before they are sold in the market, Cristobal says this would substantially cut the possibility for consumer complaints.

But Cristobal says forcing vendors to share the responsibility in ensuring quality products and services will not be enough unless consumers are well informed and vigilant or willing to fight for their rights.

Cristobal notes that while it has been nearly a decade since Republic Act No. 7394 or the Consumer Act of the Philippines was enacted, a number of Filipinos still do not know the law's basic provisions, including the prohibition against the imperious "No return, No exchange" policy.

The DTI lists down the eight basic rights of consumers: the right to basic needs; the right to safety; the right to information; the right to choose; the right to representation; the right to redress; right to consumer education; and right to a healthy environment.

Rights

Knowing your rights is the first step toward consumer activism. The more arduous and difficult task is to uphold these rights. "I'm sure all of us have at least fumed about getting ripped off by poor service or defective products but all of us hardly do anything about them or pursue our complaints through," Cristobal says. "Without the complaints, we cannot do anything." Cristobal blamed it on the Filipino consumer's lack of assertiveness. "Our own anthropologist say we don't like confrontation culturally."

"Fortunately, more Filipino consumers now are aware of their rights and are willing to fight for them, especially with trade liberalization which gave them as given consumers more choices and the explosion of communication technology which gave them more avenues for redress corporate cheats," Cristobal says.

Cristobal says this was evident in the rising number of complaints of consumers coursed through the DTI hotline from defective appliances to dropped calls of mobile phone companies.

Cristobal says that all businesses want to settle consumer complaints directly at the first level. "I don't think any business would want to have complaints on their products for-

CONSUMERS/ C5

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MANAGEMEI STYLES

IN HIS corner office at Punongbayan & Araullo's headquarters in Makati, Jose G. Araullo cuts a formidable figure that can easily be intimidating. But, as people at P&A know, Joe Araullo is one of the most approachable of the big bosses at P&A.

Gregarious and convivial, Joe has made his mark at P&A as a man with a great sense of humor. There have been countless times when his wit and cleverness came in handy when easing tense boardroom situations.

But that doesn't mean the man is all fun and no business. On the contrary, Joe has worked hard his entire life.

Joe says he was only 8 years old when his father, a doctor and businessman, would wake him up at 3:30 in the morning to open their *sari-sari* store, which his mother had inherited from her parents and had been standing for over a hundred years.

Although there was a *tindera* around, Joe had to do his own share of work including calculating change and weighing rice by the *ganta*.

In his teens, Joe found it more satisfying to work in his father's *bangus* fishpond, primarily because his father paid him for his labor. At P2 a night from 7 in the evening until the wee hours of the morning, Joe walked the several hectares of the fishpond, harvesting the *bangus* and then bringing it to the wet market the next day.

Fridays and Saturdays, days when teenagers at Joe's age probably would be playing basketball, were the busiest time of the harvest and Joe would still be there, thinking of the money he'd be getting by the end of the day.

"Of course, I wished to be with my friends, but I understood the situation. We were nine siblings and our parents needed all the help they could get," he explains.

Besides, Joe couldn't stop thinking of the Coca-Colas and other things he could buy with his extra income. So he saved his wages specifically to supplement his allowance of P1, which is only enough to buy his lunch and get home. But a funny thing happened every time he took out the 10 centavos, the amount of a bottle of Coke then.

"I just couldn't do it," Joe remembers with a laugh. "I could not part with my 10 centavos, knowing that I had worked so hard for it. So I'd pass by the canteen and then go straight to the water fountain."

Joe wasn't being stingy. He was simply remembering his father's golden rule: never spend more than you earn. "It has to be a matter of necessity. That's what he always told us."

Joe's father was certainly a big influence in his life. He has never forgotten the things that his father sacrificed for the sake of the family. And perhaps this was what made it easier for Joe to pursue a four-year degree in Commerce in San Beda College rather than a law degree, which takes eight years, as he had initially desired. He decided that he could take law later when he can pay for his education on his own.

ARAULLO

After college graduation, however, law took a back seat once more when Joe began to work as a cash teller at Pasay City Development Bank (now the Premiere Savings Bank where Araullo is considered as one of the bank's pioneers).

A part of his job was to solicit deposits from Cartimar vendors in Libertad. Every day he would go there to convince the vendors of the advantage of putting P1 to P2 savings in a bank. It was hard work, but Joe almost always went back to the bank with a new depositor.

Working in the banking and finance industry proved to be Joe's calling. After he passed the CPA licensure exams in 1960, Joe's reputation for being meticulous, reliable and trustworthy spread.

His long career includes top management positions in several prestigious institutions. He was formerly president of a large savings bank and of a leading credit card company in the Philippines. Joe also served the government as examiner of the central bank of the Philippines and later, as director of the Philippine National Bank.

Joe's combination of professional accounting skills and management-level operating experience in private industry complemented Benjamin Punongbayan's top management experience in the auditing practice.

Together, they formed a remarkable team to establish the auditing firm Punongbayan & Araullo, which has quickly established a reputation for excellence of quality and professionalism.

The success of their partnership, according to Joe, lies on their mutual respect for each other. "In the 14 years that we have been together, we have never had any misunderstanding especially about money matters," Joe points out.

"We've never fought maybe because we have always wanted the same thing. Ever since, Ben and I have wanted to build a truly professional firm and I think we've been able to achieve that with P&A."

For P&A to become the third accounting firm in the country in just 14 years is no mean feat. According to Joe, the company's edge has always been its people, and they spare no expense in making sure that each member of the firm is able to maximize their potentials. P&A's employees know it, and the result is a steadfast loyalty that any organization would like to have.

During this transition period in P&A's history, Joe takes solace in the fact that the support of P&A's people has been overwhelming. He believes that P&A will come out of this stronger.

Pet insurance grows as care cost rises

PHILADELPHIA—Zachary has endured chemotherapy, five hip and knee operations and gall bladder surgery.

He takes a daily diet of prescription drugs to combat nausea and other maladies and gets intravenous fluids at night because of kidney failure.

"He's going strong. Last July, you would have never thought he'd make it a couple more weeks," said Donna Raichle, 54, who spends about $400 a month on Zachary's care.

Zachary, by the way, is a 12-pound (5.4-kilogram) Yorkshire terrier.

His lengthy medical file may be one clue that the era of pet health insurance has arrived.

With advancements in veterinary care, more pets like Zachary can get high-tech—and costly—treatments ranging from chemotherapy to behavioral therapy.

And more owners like Raichle are seeking it out the insurance that pays for it.

"Americans are in love with their pets, and ... they're spending more on them," said Jack Stephens, 55, a veterinarian who founded the Veterinary Pet Insurance Co. in Brea, California, in 1980.

After losing $18 million over 20 years, VPI turned its first profit last year, earning $1.3 million on $47 million in revenues. The company has 85 percent of the US market.

"The economy helps, but what we find is it's really the bond of the pet with the owner that's driving our business," Stephens said.

He launched the company, with financial backing from 900 veterinarians, after watching people put their pets down for mostly financial reasons. Stephens knew how to cure the animals, but the average person's limit for pet care was about $250.

Today, the threshold is $900 and climbing, according to industry studies. Americans spend about $11.1 billion on veterinary medicine each year, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Some people will pay more than others.

One physician couple, whose German pointer was mauled by other dogs, ran up a $40,000 bill at the University of Pennsylvania's veterinary hospital. After several surgeries, skin grafts and a weeks-long stay, the purebred hunting dog is back in action.

Cable TV shows about animals and veterinary care are making people more aware of the treatments available, according to Dr. Ken Drobatz, who directs Penn's emergency veterinary service.

But only a small fraction of his customers—and fewer than one percent of the nearly 60 million households with pets nationwide—have pet insurance.

"We definitely get clients asking about it all the time. A lot of time they're asking after the fact," Drobatz said.

Most insurance companies that have entered the business over the years have failed, but that may be changing.

VPI expects to take in $72 million this year. Its policies range in price from $193 per year for standard coverage for a kitten to a $521 premium policy for a 10-year-old dog.

Raichle had pet insurance years ago for one of her first Yorkies, but felt it didn't pay most claims and dropped it.

Linda Marcus, who has also had several Yorkies, won't be without it. VPI paid about half of the $3,500 to $5,000 in veterinary bills for her beloved Bandit in the six months before he died at age 15.

"This dog brought us so much pleasure that I would have done anything that money could have done to try to keep this dog alive," said Marcus, 59, who sells real estate on Chicago's Gold Coast.

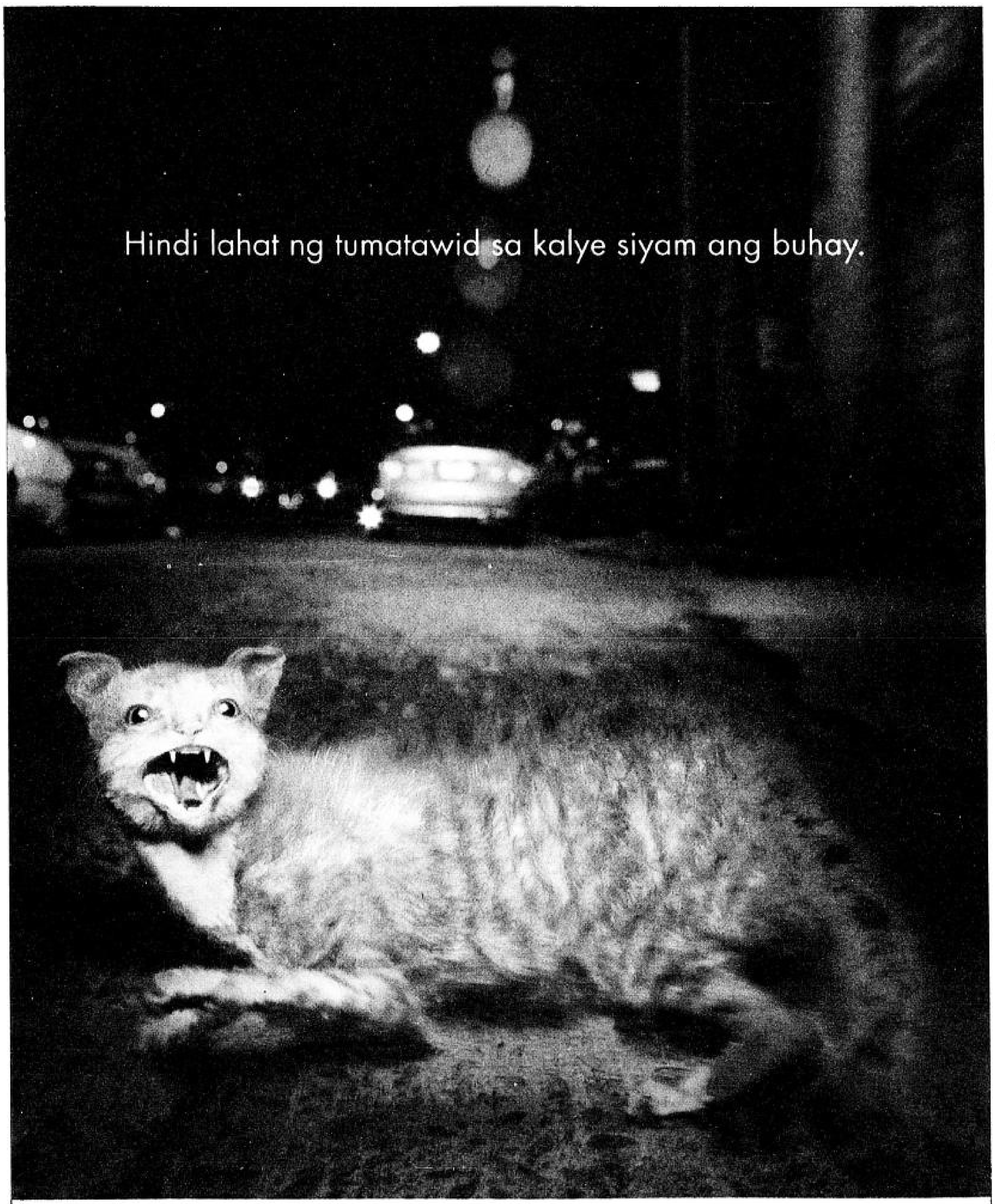
That philosophy troubles some, including Arthur Caplan, chair of Penn's Department of Medical Ethics. He hears from people every day who don't have health insurance for themselves.

"It's sort of odd to think that a pet could get certain treatments in the United States that certain people could not afford," Caplan said.

When his own collie was ill, he explained to his young son that it would be more humane to let the dog die.

Raichle said she'll know when it's time to let Zachary go.

"Zachary is a kissing machine," she said. "When he stops kissing, that will be the time to say, 'That's it.'" **AP**



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12 organizational strategies for change

(Second of Two Parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Ofelia M. Carague

IF WE all believe in the assumption that the intelligent application of technology can improve learning, then what we have to do—as educators—is to reorganize, restructure or reengineer the university to ensure that cost effectiveness is being achieved from the application of new technologies to teaching.

1. A Vision for teaching and learning. Visioning is indeed a technique that allows those working in an organization to understand the full range of possibilities for teaching and learning that technology can facilitate, and the possible outcomes, acceptable or otherwise, that might result from its implementation. It helps people working in an organization to identify and share certain goals. Even more importantly, a shared vision is necessary as a benchmark against which to assess different strategies and actions regarding the development of technology-based teaching.

2. Funding reallocation. The reallocation of funds is another critical strategy. Too often, technology implementation is driven by external grant funding or by special funding arrangements, such as student technology fees. If the university sees the use of technology for teaching as critical for its development, then funds for implementing this must come from the base-operating grant.

3. Strategies for inclusion. One of the main challenges of making technology-based teaching a core function is to extend its implementation from a relatively small number of enthusiasts and early adopters to the main body of the teaching force. This means introducing a strategy for inclusion, to ensure that all faculty are encouraged and supported in their use of technology for teaching.

4. Technology infrastructure. It is absolutely essential of course to have a strategy for developing the technology infrastructure of a university. Priorities must be set both the level of investment and the areas of investment. While such a technology infrastructure strategy is absolutely essential, unfortunately it is often the first—and sometimes the only—strategy adopted by universities: build it and they will come. However the technology infrastructure plan should be driven by, not lead, the university's overall vision and strategy for its teaching.

5. People infrastructure. Just as important as the physical infrastructure are the people required to make the physical infrastructure work. There are in fact three levels of support required to fully exploit technology. The most obvious is the technical support, the people who make the networks operate and service the computers and telecommunications. At the second level are media production and services, those who produce educational products or supply educational technology services. At the third level are those that provide educational services, such as instructional design, faculty development, project management and evaluation.

6. Student computer access. Access to computer technology is a major issue. There are several strategies that can be used to provide support for student access to computers. One is to provide computer labs on campus for students. Another strategy to increase the accessibility of computers and networks for learners are the development of government-funded educational networks, through contract leasing or bulk buying of telecommunications services, tax breaks for students on computer purchase, and the development of local community learning centers equipped with advanced technologies.

7. New teaching models. In just the same way the steam engine changed the forms of transportation, and the microchip, satellites and fiber optics are changing the forms of communication, so will technology change the forms of teaching and learning.

8. Faculty agreements and training. It should be apparent by now that the use of technology needs to be accompanied by some major changes in the way faculty are trained and rewarded. Teaching with technology is not something that can easily be picked up along the way, as something to be done off the side of the desk while engaged in more important or time-consuming activities such as research. The most common form of training given to faculty is to show them how to use the technology. This though is starting at the wrong place. Many faculties need to understand why it is important to use technology for teaching in the first place. It has to be related to the changing environment in which universities find themselves and in particular to the changing needs of learners. Faculty needs to understand the different roles that technology can play in teaching, and how this alters the way that teaching needs to be organized. Only then does it make much sense to train faculty in how to use a particular piece of technology.

9. Project management. Project management means establishing each course or teaching module as a project.

10. New organizational structures. The challenge with regard to organizational structures is to develop a system that encourages teaching units to be flexible, innovative and able to respond quickly to changes in subject matter, student needs and technology, while at the same time avoiding duplication, redundancy and conflicting standards and policies.

11. Collaboration and consortia. New technologies are resulting in global competition for universities.

12. Research and evaluation. The need for systematic research and evaluation into the use of new technologies should be obvious. However, it is important that the right kind of research should be done. The wrong kind of research is to compare the learning effectiveness of technology-based teaching with the learning effectiveness of classroom-based teaching, using the classroom based model as the baseline. Many hundred of thousands of such comparative studies have been made in the past, and the usual result when the comparisons have been done using sound research methodology is that there is no significant difference.

Even more important that research into learning outcomes is research into learner's response to using technologies, and in particular what learners and teachers believe may be lost or gained in using such approaches to learning. These results are likely to vary considerably from individual to individual, so it is important to see whether there are groups or types of learners who benefit more than others from technology-based teaching. This kind of research should also help identify the critical aspects of face-to-face teaching, which are likely to be as much social as instructional.

Another area of research that has so far been neglected is around organization of technology-based teaching: which organizational arrangements seem to work best for different kinds of university.

Yet another area where research and development is needed is into new interfaces and applications software that facilitate different kinds of skills, or the development of technology teaching. These are generic tools that could be used for the development of a wide range of courses.

Lastly and perhaps most important of all, there is a need for studies into the cost-benefits of technology-based teaching. As well as looking at the costs and benefits of a particular technology, it is also important to look at the social and economic impacts of moving to technology-based teaching.

Conclusion

New technologies are fundamentally changing the nature of knowledge. Nevertheless, we still need to maintain a balance between teaching and learning done through face-to-face contact, and technology-based learning. Many skills cannot or should not be taught solely through technology, although the range of knowledge and skills that can be taught effectively in this way is probably much greater than most teachers would credit.

The trick is to understand that there are many different clients, needs or markets for knowledge, teaching and learning. For some of these markets, technology-based learning and knowledge is perfectly appropriate; for others, it is not. There is a need to be selective and sophisticated in our decisions as to how we want to use technologies to learn and teach.

Secondly, the role of both learners and teachers will change in order to exploit the benefits that technology can bring to learning. This in turn will have a major impact on our educational institutions.

Thirdly, as we move to representing knowledge in various ways through technology, it will change the nature of our understanding. This does not mean that our understanding will be better or worse; just different.

Technology is so much fun, but we can be drown in our technology. The fog of information can drive out knowledge. ***Daniel J. Boorstin***

(The author is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and President of Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

MOVEMENTS

GMA Network has new execs

GMA Network Inc. recently appointed two new executives to head its creative services and post production Divisions.

The new appointees are Ernesto "Bogie" Gallardo, vice president for creative services, and Edward "Ding" Achacoso, vice president for post production. Both executives are prominent in their respective fields.

Gallardo was the vice president/director for business development of J. Walter Thompson (Manila) and the creative director for various prominent advertising agencies including Grafik McCann-Erickson (Indonesia), McCann-Erickson (Philippines) among others, before joining GMA.

He is a recipient of several awards for his works in advertising, including several honors from the Philippine Advertising Congress, 1996 Awit Awards for "Best Produced Record of the Year (Sabado Nights)," and The Catholic Mass Media Award in 1996 for "Best TV Commercial."

Award-winning cinematographer, film and musical director Edward "Ding" Achacoso heads GMA's post production division—the newest division of GMA Network that now services the post production needs of the company and its marketing subsidiary, GMA Marketing and Productions Inc.

UCPB exec elected TOAP head

UCPB first vice president Ma. Elena S. Sarmiento was recently elected as president and member of the board of directors of the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP).

Elected with Sarmiento are PhilTrust's Roberto S. Vergara as vice president and director; RCBC's Federico P. Tancongco as secretary and director; and Equitable PCIB's Rolando D. Esguerra as treasurer and director.

The other directors are Banco de Oro's Ador A. Abrogena; JP Morgan Chase's Antonino B. Inumerable; HSBC's Ma. Teresa R. Toledo; BPI's Susan M. Manalo; and PBCom's Raul C. Diaz.

TOAP is the association of banks and financial institutions authorized to engage in trust business in the Philippines. Founded in 1964, the association currently has 48 member organizations.

Sarmiento heads UCPB's Trust Banking Division. She graduated magna cum laude from the College of the Holy Spirit with a Bachelor of Science in Commerce, major in accounting.

The Philippine Trust Institute, the training arm of TOAP, named Sarmiento as its most outstanding graduate in 1984 and sent her to attend the American Bankers Association's Trust course at the Northwestern University National Trust School in Illinois, USA.

New chair for Cocolife

COCOLIFE, a leader in the insurance industry, recently welcomed its new chairman of the board, Noel C. Cabrera.

Meeting the Cocolife Corps of Officers for the first time, Cabrera engaged them in friendly chatter and dined with them at Cocolife's Executive Dining Lounge.

Cabrera was introduced to the group by Cocolife president Alfredo C. Tumacder who cited his many achievements as a distinguished journalist and his performance in public service notably his stint as Press Secretary in the Macapagal administration.

In his response, the new chair stressed Cocolife's role in the development of the Philippine economy and its invaluable service to its many publics particularly its customers.

He also emphasized Cocolife's contribution in terms of uplifting the lives of coconut farmers. He said that he accepted his appointment to the post, motivated by a noble and positive objective—that of conserving the gains of the company and actively supporting the thrust for industry leadership, customer service, financial stability and becoming principal of choice.

DHL names new country head

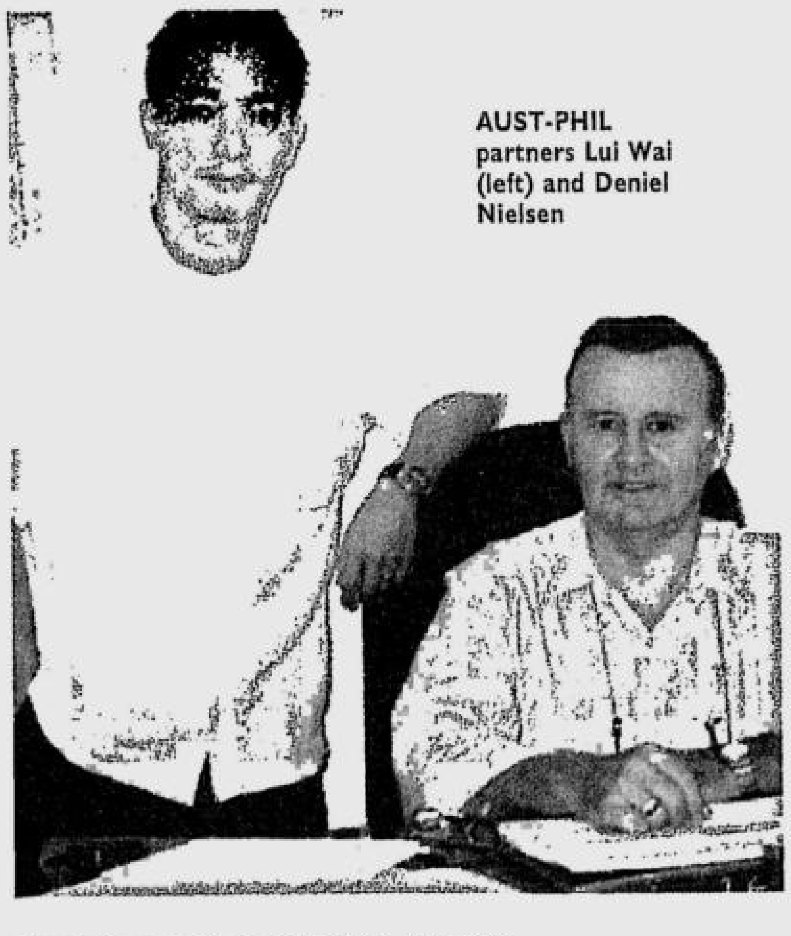
DHL Worldwide Express, the world's leading air express company, announced the appointment of Charles Brewer as the new country manager for DHL Worldwide Express Philippines Corp.

Charles Brewer assumes the overall responsibility of managing country office operations, establishing industry leading service standards and ensuring market leadership for DHL. Brewer takes the post previously held by Mike Fitzpatrick, who has been promoted to Area Director for South Asia and Indochina. Fitzpatrick will now be leading DHL's growth efforts in 11 markets covering Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

"I am very excited to take on this new role and I look forward to working with my new family, DHL Worldwide Philippines," said Brewer. "The Philippines is a very important market for DHL and we remain highly committed to providing our Filipino customers with the best services in the international air express industry."

Big, gold belt buckle gives rise to RP-Aussie business venture

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao



AUST-PHIL partners Lui Wai (left) and Deniel Nielsen

AUSTRALIAN national Deniel Nielsen came to the Philippines 12 years ago and walked into the jewelry shop of Lui Chi Hang in the Manila Midtown Hotel.

Nielsen liked what he saw and fell in love with a big belt buckle made of gold. Since he did not have any money with him, he left a personal check. Lui, however, said he did not accept personal checks, especially from foreigners.

Nielsen then told Lui to keep the check, wait for it to clear and then he would go back to the Philippines to pick up the belt buckle.

They shook on the deal and Lui got his money, Nielsen came back for the belt buckle many months later and the two businessmen became friends.

"It was a very unusual transaction and it really took a lot of trust between us to do that transaction because he could have run away with my money, but we just knew that we could trust each other," Nielsen says in an interview with SundayBiz.

Unusual

Lui and Nielsen hit it off and they soon explored ways of going into business together and continue their unusual friendship.

"It took about six months of exploring before we decided on our business. First, we talked about putting up a taxi fleet, then we looked into setting up a candle factory. We eventually decided on putting up a company that would sell aluminum shower enclosures in the country," Nielsen says.

They put up P80,000 each and Fast Glass Aluminum International Inc. had its first 45-square meter office in the space right next to the jewelry store.

Lui and Nielsen decided early on that their aluminum products would be the best in the country, and would offer a more environment friendly alternative to wood in house or building construction.

Bringing in quality products, however, came at a stiff price to the fledgling company, which started with three employees including a driver.

"It cost us a fortune to air freight all the orders from Australia, because what we used to do was to import only when there was an order. But we were really looking at the long term," Nielsen explains.

Stubborn

He says it took the company about four years before they turned in a profit, but he adds it was a necessary expense to establish the company's products in the market and to develop a reputation for quality and value for money.

"My father and Mr. Nielsen can be described as stubborn businessmen. They really wanted to do things the hard way and build a foundation first for the company," says Lui's son Wai who took over the helm upon his father's death.

From shower enclosures, the Chinese-Australian partnership expanded operations to include all kinds of aluminum products for residential and commercial projects, capitalizing on Australian quality and Filipino craftsmanship.

ASIDE from commercial applications, Aust-Phil also provides aluminum products for residential projects

In 1995, Fast Glass became Aust-Phils Aluminum International Inc. and it started to branch out to the provinces "to spread its wings and fly across the nation." By 1998, the 45-sq. m. office became a 4,000-sq. m. compound in Mandaluyong City that serves as a showroom, factory, fabrication and sales and administration. It was also the year when founder Lui Chi Hang passed away.

The younger Lui and Nielsen persevered and say they continued to meet challenges including the real estate market bust. Lui works as the chief executive officer while Nielsen is president.

"We have a lot of communication, not confrontation which is why we work well together. We may not have the same idea but we have agreed to make room for new ideas and see each other's point of view," Lui says.

Differences

Lui stresses that they managed to do well despite the occasional friction and cultural differences because of the foundation laid down by Nielsen and the late Lui.

"We have always said that we have trust and respect for each other that's why we are strong," Lui says.

He adds that the difference in cultures is more of an advantage than a disadvantage for the company, as they were able to bring out the best of each other's qualities for the good of the business.

Nielsen admitted that he was surprised at how Filipino workers could easily go to sleep at the stroke of 12 noon. He says it is not the same in Australia where it was not unusual for employees to work through their lunches.

Lui, on the other hand, says that Filipinos usually have the impression that Australians were lazy or too laid back, but exposure to Australian culture through Nielsen proved that Australians were actually very hardworking.

"I also noticed that it would take about 20 employees to do a job that only three or four Australian employees would do. Most are also mono skilled, which means that if a person is a truck driver, it means he can only drive a truck. They are not multi-skilled," Nielsen says.

He, however, notes that Filipinos have superior artistic skills compared with their Australian counterparts.

"Filipinos can do all kinds of things with their hands that Australians would usually think are impossible or just too hard to do. I also noticed that given the right kind of environment, Filipinos are willing to learn, to improve themselves," Nielsen says.

Lui says Aust-Phil taps into these qualities to produce quality building materials for the clients. Nielsen and Lui emphasize on a common goal: product quality, excellent service and customer satisfaction.

In 12 years, Aust-Phil is now one of the biggest suppliers of aluminum products for both residential and commercial uses.

Lui says the growth could also be attributed to right timing because Aust-Phil was leading the pack during the real estate boom in the early 1990s.

Its projects include the Rockwell buildings, Orchid Garden, residences of leading business people in posh subdivisions, and high-rise buildings.

The real estate boom has long past but Aust-Phil continues to get orders and has managed to remain profitable.

Through the ups and downs of the business, Nielsen says Aust-Phil remained as solid as its aluminum curtain walls because of the friendship and business ethics shared by the partners—even if one was Australian and the other a Hong Kong Chinese working with Filipino workers.

High-tech banking with a human touch

IN AN industry driven by system-wide automation where all it takes is a few button clicks to consummate an online transaction, veteran banker Nilo Pacheco, Jr. stands firm that the human touch still plays a crucial role in high-tech banking.

"Combined with convenience and timely financial products, that intangible feeling of personal warmth still exerts a major influence on someone choosing a bank to transact with," says Pacheco, executive vice president and head of branches for International Exchange Bank (iBank), one of the biggest and fastest-growing commercial banks in the country.

Without a doubt, convergence technology has revolutionized the way financial transactions are carried. The pervasive use of the Internet and digital telephones now allow people to carry out virtually most of the common banking transaction without needing to be physically present or sending an authorized representative to the bank.

"The primary reason why we heavily invest in electronic facilities is because we know that our customers value their time and so must we. But that is not where the investment ends," Pacheco explains.

"We invest just as heavily in customer service training for our people. The ultimate measure of a bank in the eyes of a customer is trust. The best way to cultivate a relationship of trust is through human interactions wherein the bank staff extends an unforgettable quality of customer service to their customers," he adds.

In the daily grind of banking, these human interactions can range from a simple phone call, to walk-in inquiries on deposit rates, to processing a loan application. This is why iBank has deliberately harnessed its strengths in human relations, coupled with responsive banking products to differentiate itself from the field of some 40 other local and international banks in the country.

This is also the reason why iBank has institutionalized both basic and continuing studies on customer service. Top executives are thoroughly trained in world-class service standards and continuously pursue courses on customer satisfaction benchmarks.

Last year, iBank sent three of its senior officers to attend the Disney Approach Business Program at the Disney Institute, Florida which showcased the powerful strategies and best practices applied by Disney on people management, quality service, loyalty, and creativity and innovation.

"The significance of customer service is first drilled into everyone through a 40-hour orientation course called 'Service Mileage.' Our service standard is expressed clearly in our Service Strategy which says that the bank wants to please 'the toughest customers'. This is the duty of everyone. And when we say everyone, we mean everyone starting from the president to the security guard who greets you at the doorstep," Pacheco points out.

When Pacheco says "everyone" this includes support personnel such as the maintenance, messengerial, and security staff as well as the students who join the rigorous iBank summer internship program.

Last year, iBank pushed its service standards to an even higher notch when it instituted another 40-hour course called the Exceeding Customers Expectation Through Excellent Service Delivery (EXCEED) program which is an intensive follow-up on the Service Mileage program .

EXCEED was designed to build upon the strong customer service foundation that has been laid during the basic training of the staff personnel. It aims to further strengthen iBank's service culture by developing additional guidelines ensuring that customer wants and needs are handled at a uniformly excellent level by the staff.

"We believe that this complementary program is aptly named. After all, this is what we aspire for —to exceed the customer service expectations of customers. This is the primary objective of our institution and iBankers who best exemplify it are given the highest recognition," explains Pacheco.

The iBank Service Excellence Awards is an integral part of building an institution-wide culture of service. Every year, the top three branches rated according to the quality of service they have delivered to customers are cited and rewarded with cash prizes.

WILLIAM Whang, senior vice president, center head of Center 7 and Nilo Pacheco Jr., executive vice president, cluster head of liability management, head of branches

"In order to maintain a competitive edge, bankers today must keep abreast with what is constantly changing without losing sight of what hasn't changed. At iBank, we scour the world for the latest banking innovations while accumulating valuable feedback through an annual customer satisfaction survey," Pacheco reveals.

"Customers are the ultimate judge of a bank's quality of service. Customers are the ultimate resource on what service standards to aspire for. Our approach to reaching or even exceeding these standards is a marriage of hi-tech convenience laced with pro-active personalized banking," Pacheco concludes.

Consumers, time to know your rights

From page C1

warded to government agencies or publicized in media. They would surely want to solve the problem immediately," he says.

Before making a complaint, consumers are advised to identify the problem first; decide whether a repair, replacement or refund is adequate redress; and gather documentation such bills, warranties and contracts. A complaint should be first made to the store or provider involved before going to the agency.

But a major problem in handling consumer complaints was the large number of agencies enforcing consumer protection laws most of whom have no clear-cut roles on consumer issues.

The Department of Health is in charge of monitoring adulterated, banned, mislabeled food and drugs, hazardous substances and cosmetics.

The Department of Agriculture takes care of substandard and mislabeled agriculture products.

The Department of Interior and Local Government handles defective or tampered weighing scales.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas deals with non- or incomplete disclosure of true costs of credit extended by banks and pawnshops while the Securities and Exchange Commission oversees the same failings by financing companies and pre-need plans. The Department of Energy regulates the sale of petroleum products while the National Telecommunications Commission is the watchdog for telephones, mobile phones, Internet and cable television services.

Cristobal says the DTI was in the best position to be the umbrella agency that would cut across this bureaucratic web. Cristobal feels that Congress should give serious thought to a proposal to consolidate consumer-related functions in any industry to a single agency. "The committee is currently reviewing whether the DTI could be designated to oversee consumer protection."

For consumer activism to take a stronger root in the country, however, Cristobal says it was also necessary to form a national consumer protection group. This is why the DTI has initiated efforts to enlist consumer groups throughout the country to push forward its consumer awareness and vigilance campaign. "We are looking forward to a strong consumer group within the next few years."

Workers build, manage and grow own company

From page C8

What saved the company through its most difficult years were Akol's Chinese and Filipino friends and some kindhearted clients. He cited San Miguel Corp. for providing the company financial assistance by giving it cash advances for stevedoring and arrastre services. There were other kindred souls who would at one time or the other come to his help so there would be no interruption of the port operation.

Akol said the first eight years of Opascor was the "golden years of the company." The company grew phenomenally. It bought its office building for P18 million. It acquired equipment to modernize its operations.

It also acquired a cargo-handling firm at the Port of Cagayan de Oro, thereby linking it with the Cebu International Port.

Eventually, Opascor would earn recognition in the industry when it established the highest level of productivity in containerized operations even as it keeps the cargo-handling tariff 40-50 percent lower than in Manila.

How was a bunch of dockworkers, most of whom with little formal education, able to stick together and make their company grow beyond public expectations?

Akol said the success of Opascor was largely due to hard work and trust. Realizing they now own the company, the workers have to work harder than ever before. Work at the pier is backbreaking, but they did not mind the hardship. This is not to say, Akol said, that everything was in perfect harmony. He said there was some bickering and grumbling among the various groups of workers, but their personal differences did not prevent them from doing their jobs well.

Another factor that work well for the company was their complete trust on Akol, especially during the early years of the company. The workers gave him carte blanche to manage the company. If a decision were referred to the new owners, they would toss it back to him and let him make the decision. That was how they trusted him.

Akol repaid their trust on him by making the company grow steadily at a much faster rate than most cargo-handling operators in the country.

The workers experiment that started 12 years ago has not yet reached its denouement, but if the present is the yardstick to determine how far it has gone and whether it would still go farther, it certainly has gone a long way. The workers enterprise is a living, vibrant reality and is still growing. It should make converts of many doubters.

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The importance of having a world-class MBA today

SIGNIFICANT changes are taking shape in today's global marketplace. Time-tested marketing practices of old no longer apply to today's sophisticated consumer.

The world's business climate has become even more competitive. Now, more than ever, businessmen and professionals are hitting the books once again to better equip themselves with the new tools for 21st century international business. These future tycoons are getting themselves an MBA, and not just any MBA course will do.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of Filipinos taking their MBAs. Many prefer getting into international MBA programs for its greater advantages, enabling them to have the corporate edge.

Of course, getting an international MBA requires a lot of time and investment as it means living and studying abroad. But thanks to globalization, many Filipnos can now earn their international MBAs in the Philippines through the York School of Management.

York School of Management is the partner of the Edinburgh Business School of Heriot-Watt University.

Established in 1821, Heriot-Watt University ranks among the top 10 universities in Scotland, according to a survey conducted by the Financial Times. Heriot-Watt has a long tradition of innovative teaching and learning geared to the needs of industry, business and society. Its MBA program, the Edinburgh Business School (EBS) MBA, is one of the world's largest and is recognized by Fortune 500 companies. It has won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement twice, both in 1994 and 1999.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT SIGNING

Lawyer Jessy N. Macias, CCBPI SVP and HR director (first row, center) signs the agreement with Ilagan Coca-Cola Monthly Employees Association (ICCMEA) president Robert V. Manlapaz (first row, to Macias' right) during the formal signing of ICCMEA's collective bargaining agreement in Baguio City June 7. CCBPI management and union officers likewise sign and witness the event.

Broadband Phils expands capacity

INTERNET firm Broadband Philippines is expanding its capacity with a newly acquired Digital Signal Level 3 connection from MCI WorldCom.

DS3 is a highly reliable digital private line service with the capacity to transmit high volumes of information at speeds of 45 megabits per second (Mbps).

As opposed to the other types of Internet connections, DS3 adheres to an error-free performance objective and lets subscribers enjoy an improved broadband service.

"DS3 is our response to the market's demand for a better, faster and more reliable access to the Internet" said company chair and chief executive officer Jose Perez de Venecia III.

De Venecia noted that on top of a better broadband service that the customer will experience, DS3 will allow the company to be more competitive in terms of pricing and service to its clients.

"With this kind of technology backed up by Broadband Philippines' 99.9-percent service level agreement, subscribers will be able to enjoy all the benefits that broadband technology can bring to their businesses.

With our existing broadband wireless connection to the customer, plus the recent purchase of a DS3 connection of Broadband Philippines' to the Internet, we feel that this is the best service that customers should experience," he said.

Broadband Philippines provides a wide range of telecommunication services such as corporate data solutions, Internet service, e-commerce solutions and voice services.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 3790

RC OLONGAPO PRESIDENT AWARDED

Rotary Club of Olongapo president Rene T. Tanjuakio receives one of 14 outstanding district awards from District 3790 Governor Marquez 'Mark' O. Go during the yearend review at Dagupan City June 15

CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM AT AIM

Pfizer recently conducted free medical checkups and consultations at the Asian Institute of Management as part of its Corporate Wellness Program. The faculty, staff and students of AIM availed of the free blood pressure, total cholesterol, blood sugar, triglycerides and ECG tests. Various lectures on dieting, smoking and exercise and its impact on health were conducted by Drs. Pia Banico, Ray Kasilag and Julie Querijero. The Corporate Wellness Program is a regular undertaking of Pfizer to ensure that health care reaches everyone. Kasilag is shown checking AIM president Roberto de Ocampo's blood pressure.

12TH LI'L HANDS CLUB FUN DAY

August 24 is another big day bash to all Li'l Hands Club members. Li'l Hands Club is again inviting children to a fun-filled day of surprises, parlor games, treats and activities. This time, Dream Town, one of Li'l Hands' longtime friends, will again host the fun. As usual, Li'l Hands Club will not be a kiddy arts club if the day doesn't start with an art workshop. The workshop starts at exactly 12 noon. See those happy faces? Don't miss the fun. Join the Li'l Hands Club, 'Where Fun Learning Begins!' Dream Town is located at the 3rd Floor of Robinsons Manila. For more details, call 842-1515 to 17; 568-5868 to 76, or e-mail club@lilhands.com of fax 842-1518.

SANDUGO AWARDEE

Bulacan Vice-Governor and Bulacan Local Blood Council chair Aurelio "Rely" Plamenco (extreme right) has been chosen as a recipient of the Sandugo Outstanding Local Government Executive Award, as announced by Dr. Margarita M. Galon, Undersecretary of Health. In grateful recognition of the altruism of local government executives who have helped citizens be aware of the importance of voluntary blood donation, the National Voluntary Blood Services Program held the 'Sandugo Recognition Day' for local government executives July 30 at the Heritage Hotel Ballroom, Roxas Boulevard, Plamenco (standing, right) is shown encouraging a volunteer blood donor.

BITS & Clips

Experience the bounty of Davao

THE TOWER Club, the country's premier business and social club, will highlight the special cuisine and produce of Davao in a festival titled "Bountiful Davao". Organized in cooperation with The Marco Polo Davao, the festival will be held at The Continental Restaurant from Aug. 5 to 10. A ceremony marks the opening at 11:30 a.m. At 2:30 p.m. of Aug. 5, Davaoena and former Miss Universe Margie Moran-Floirendo will host tea, and her exotic shawls made from Mindanao fabrics will be presented. On Aug. 6, there will be the business forum "Mindanao: Business as Usual." Daily lunch buffet, set lunch, and a five-course set menu with coffee or tea and petit fours will be available at The Continental, and will make use of ingredients native to Davao. Tower Club members and their guests can call 885-7085 for reservations.

Frankie in Hi-Nulac Ad

FRANKIE Cuneta Pangilinan, daughter of megastar Sharon Cuneta and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, is the bright and bubbly new baby that graces the latest print and TV advertising of Hi-Nulac. Only 16 months old, Frankie developed her motor skills earlier than expected. She was toilet trained at 8 months, started walking at 9 months and began singing and dancing at 12 months. In part, this is due to a healthy diet that includes higher amounts of whey, which helps Frankie absorb more nutrients that enhance her physical and mental development. Thus, she continues to grow bigger and smarter, faster than other kids her age.

Responsible TV campaign

RAINS notwithstanding, Baguio City resumes its campaign for responsible television through twin events being staged at Camp John Hay on Aug. 8 and 9 under the auspices of the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television (Anak TV) and supporters Columbia International, Goldilocks Bakeshop and Panasonic. The first is the Symposium on Appreciating Television. Over 10 colleges and universities in and around Baguio will attend the morning affair that begins at 8:30. The second will be staged on Aug. 9 and targets young TV users through a Seminar on TV Literacy for Children. The unique module is being tested by Seafctv after having tried it in Davao, Pagsanjan, and Bacolod. The free events aim to increase TV literacy among Baguio residents as well as popularize the concept of empowerment among televiewers.

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P100,000 SHOPPING MONEY WINNERS

BPI Card recently awarded three winners of P100,000 for its Shopping Money Raffle promo. Present are (from left) Eddie Guba, vice president for credit cards, Raquel Maliwat, Pio Guasis, and Alex Yu, winning cardholders, Arnold Sanlano, sales manager, and Tina Tumalad, sales officer. The promo enabled BPI Express Credit Card Holders, who had their applications approved from May 25 to June 25, qualify for a weekly raffle of P100,000. The promo has been extended to Aug. 15 so more customers can apply for a BPI Express Credit Card at their nearest BPI or BPI Family Bank branch.

FAST LOGISTICS GROUP LAUNCHES PROGRAM

Fast Logistics Group, a supply chain group of companies involved in cargo, parcels/documents delivery, warehousing and distribution, recently launched its Integrated Management Development program designed to equip its management team with the tools of the 'manager of the future'. The program includes basic supervisory skills, problem solving, effective coaching, and counseling. Shown are Anlec Dungog, VP and COO, Jet Nera, training and development manager, and the management team of Fast Logistics.

NEW OPTHALMOLOGY CLINIC AT AHMC

The Asian Visions Group, a team of opthalmologists each trained in a variety of subspecialties, recently opened a clinic at The Asian Hospital and Medical Center in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Seated are Drs. Mary Rose Teodoro and Maria Rosa Jimenez. Standing are Drs. Leonardo Mangubat, Edward Uy, Benjamin Abela, Sherman Valero and Alfonso Bengzon.

Investment bankers hit road amid tough times

LONDON—Investment bankers are having second thoughts about their high-rolling careers and lifestyle as the worst bear market in 30 years ravages their industry.

With investment banks cutting 60,000 investment banking jobs since the beginning of last year, many have taken redundancy packages and run off to seek pastures new.

"A guy on our team has grown a goatee and gone off to become a photographer," said an investment banker at a US brokerage firm. "It's a bit radical."

"A lot of people have gone traveling and then there are all the dot gones of course," the banker said, referring to casualties of the Internet crash.

Some out-of-work bankers are trying to get back in, but many want a long-term change.

"Investment banking certainly hasn't got any easier, it's got more competitive and it's certainly become quite a difficult space to be in at the moment," said Simon Fry, who left Japanese investment bank Nomura two years ago to run his own exclusive gym in London's upmarket Chelsea area.

He said 15 years ago very few people left the industry for good, with most coming back when the bull market resumed. "I'm not sure how many people these days go back."

Fry, who was a managing director when he left Nomura after 23 years in the business, said it took time to adjust to life outside banking. He said the biggest adjustment for people leaving the industry was the suddenly slower pace.

"If you lose a job in investment banking at eleven in the morning you kind of think you ought to have your life re-organized by twelve," he said.

Two-way street

The bear market has come as a shock to the latest generation of investment bankers, who had come to believe that stock prices only went one way—up.

"They had got used to being `Masters of the Universe' and then suddenly they weren't," said a banking consultant at an accounting group.

Bankers say the current downturn is far worse than the stock market crash of 1987. "That was very severe, but it was quick. This is different, this has been just one-way traffic for a long time, since March 2000 we've been going one way," said a senior executive at a European investment bank.

Many in the industry have never lived through an extended market decline before and certainly not one as severe as this.

"You literally have to be ancient to have been through this sort of thing before," another banker said. "The mood is generally very subdued, very miserable. I think morale is shot to pieces everywhere."

Good times, bad times

City of London investment bankers, notorious for their fast-lane lifestyles, had probably never had it so good in the stock market bonanza of 1999-2000.

Billion-dollar mergers or equity issues came so thick and fast they could hardly keep pace. Many were able to negotiate multimillion-dollar bonuses guaranteed for three or more years.

"You couldn't even hire junior bankers unless you threw in dry cleaning services or dog walking," said an executive at another US investment bank.

Then the technology bubble burst, stock markets slumped back to 1997 levels and deals all but dried up. The banks, still staffed for the boom, had to slash jobs and with stocks recently hitting their lowest levels in five years, there is a real threat of more cuts to come.

M&A bankers have been scrambling for business. Some have even offered their services for free to win mandates or in one case in Germany last year offered backhanders to get a deal.

No one is going to shed too many tears for those now losing their jobs in an industry notorious for excess.

"So much more money has been made that anybody with their head screwed on half straight will have saved something," said another London-based investment banker at a top advisory firm.

Even so, a lot of bankers won't have made quite enough to retire because they've got used to an expensive lifestyle.

"It's almost like the seven wise and foolish virgins," said one analyst at a US brokerage. The ones who have stashed away their riches can afford to get out, she said.

Some who saved wisely are going off to do things they've always wanted to do. "A friend of mine went off to do a doctorate in Bronze Age history," said another broker.

Century-old bank named best foreign bank in RP

CITIBANK marked its 100th anniversary year in the Philippines by again being cited the "Best Foreign Bank in the Philippines" by Finance Asia Magazine, one of Asia's leading financial publications. It is the third consecutive year that Citibank has received the award.

In giving the award to Citibank, Finance Asia cited a testimonial which it said "cannot be ignored" from President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who thanked Citibank for its invaluable and innovative contributions to the development of the Philippine financial markets to the benefit of the government, private business, and consumers in availing of global advances in banking products and technology.

Global access

Arroyo also noted Citibank's role in assisting the Philippines to access global financial and capital markets in support of the country's development financing requirements and commended the bank for its singular contribution in the training of generations of Filipino business leaders and finance professionals.

Citibank was recently voted the "Best Bank in Asia," by Euromoney Magazine's 2002 Awards of Excellence. Citigroup's chair and CEO, Sanford I. Weill was also awarded the 2001 CEO of the Year award from the leading CEO Magazine.

In accepting the award, Weill said the company's new management structure was a key element to its global success. "Our new management structure, designed to leverage the performance of our leading product franchises globally while building upon a strong local presence in every region in the world, will enable us to continue to grow our market share and profitability as we pursue our goal of being truly 'best in class' in each of our product areas across the more than 100 countries we serve."

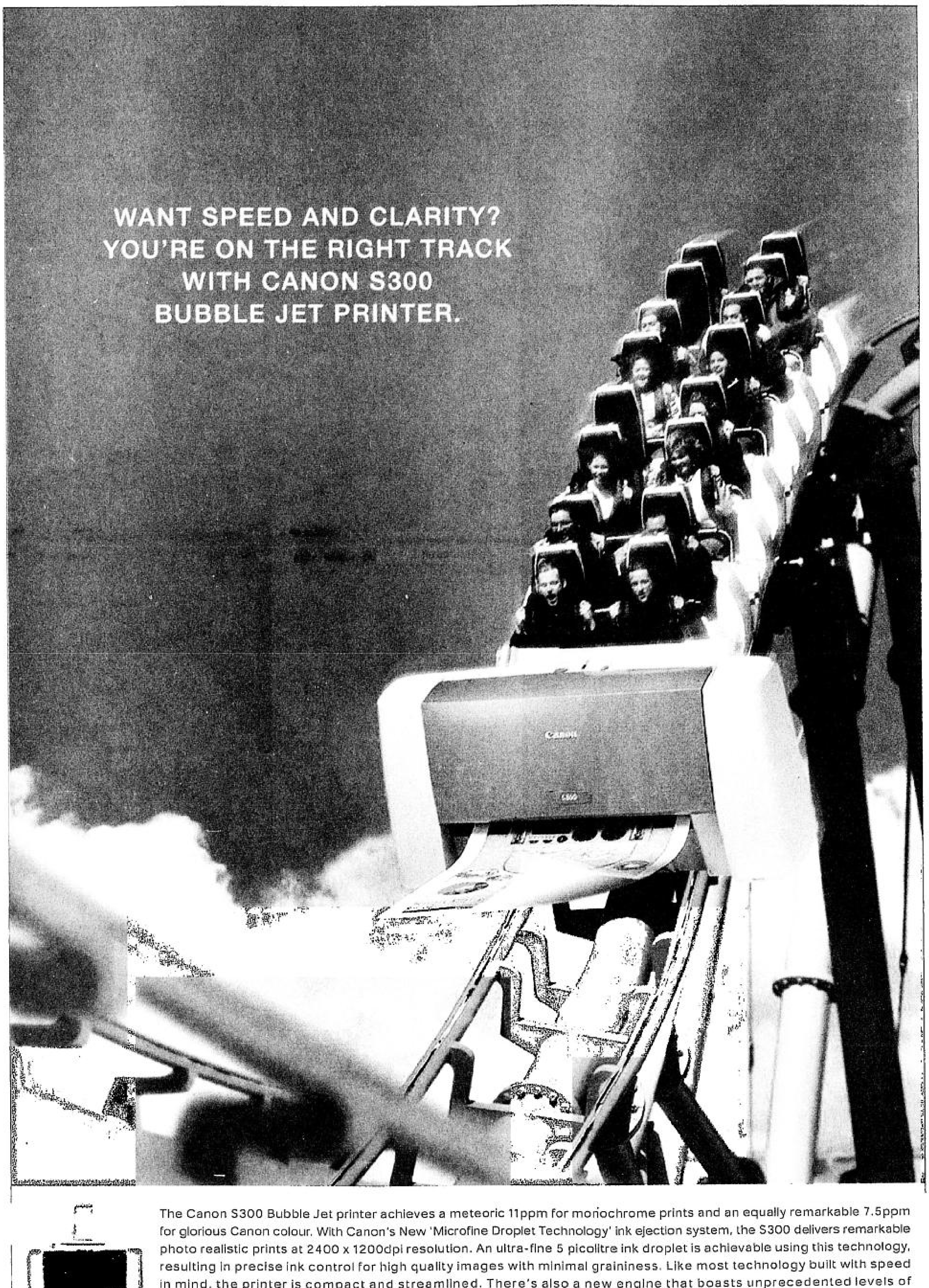
More awards

The awards come during a year in which Citigroup continues to show it can deliver significant returns to shareholders. Citigroup reported a $4.08 billion Gaap (generally accepted accounting principles) net income for the second quarter, a 15 percent increase over the same period last year. Citigroup's core income for the second quarter was a record $4.06 billion, a 7-percent increase over the second quarter of 2001.

Weill added the performance of the second quarter "once again underscores the leadership positions of our businesses. Citigroup's Global Consumer businesses generated 25 percent income growth this quarter, with strong customer volume growth in cards, retail banking and consumer finance."

Citigroup's ability to generate strong results is underlined by the fact that its total equity reached $92.5 billion as of June 2002.

In the Philippines, Citibank has built major businesses in corporate, consumer, private and investment banking over the past 100 years. Its net income after tax was up 20 percent against last year. It now ranks third by asset size of any bank in the Philippines. Citibank's local nature is reflected in the fact that of the 1,539 staff it employs, 99 percent are Filipinos.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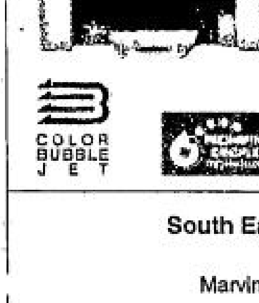

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Workers build, manage and grow own company

BENJAMIN Akol

WHEN the Cebu-based Oriental Port and Allied Services Inc. (Opascor) was organized in 1990, only a few people thought it would get off the ground.

There was reason for the pessimism on the future of the new company: majority of the owners are dockworkers and only a few of the company executives had experience in running a corporation.

These people were faced with the possibility of losing their jobs, so they pooled their separation and retirement benefits in the boldest leveraged buy-out ever made in the country.

The company they bought had almost non-existent resources. Its fixed assets consisted of some dilapidated equipment for stevedoring and arrastre operation.

Worse, after buying out the stocks of the company, creating a Trust Cooperative Loan Fund and paying a little over P3 million to the new owners as take-home pay, Opascor was left with only a paltry sum of P64,000 as operating capital.

The only good thing going for the new corporation was that when it made the buy-out, it inherited a five-year exclusive management and operation contract for the stevedoring and arrastre services for the Cebu International Port.

The new owners parlayed the contract successfully. Through most of the 1990s, it grew by leaps and bounds, surpassing public expectations.

Today, 12 years after the first workers enterprise was launched as a daring experiment, it has become a living testimony to the capacity of the workers to build their own company, manage it and make it grow.

When Opascor observed its 12th foundation anniversary last June 16, it was a far cry from the struggling company that workers put up in 1990. Today, it has become the biggest cargo-handling operator in the Visayas and Mindanao in terms of equipment and cargo-handling capacity.

Its remittances constitute 40 percent of the total earnings of the Cebu Port Authority, the agency that supervises the operations of cargo-handling operators at the Port of Cebu for domestic cargoes and the Cebu International Port for foreign cargoes.

Opascor has also made huge investments in equipment for port operations. In 1996 alone, it invested P100 million to acquire quay cranes, transtainers and trucks. It also has the highest productivity level in containerized operations while maintaining a very competitive cargo-handling tariff which is 40 percent—50 percent lower than in Manila

Steering the firm to success

The man who is credited for conceiving, organizing and steering Opascor successfully to become the only workers enterprise in the country is a soft-spoken, mild-mannered man from Tarlac—Benjamin Akol, the company president.

He is one of two company executives who do not hail from Cebu but who know the ins and outs of stevedoring and arrastre operations.

Akol learned the ropes of stevedoring and arrastre by necessity. In 1986, when he was working for Petrophil (the merger of Petron and Filoil), his boss asked him to manage what used to be the Luzon Stevedoring Corp. (Lusteveco).

At that time, Akol was taking up MBA at the De La Salle University School of Business and was reluctant to interrupt his studies. But he and his boss made an arrangement where he could go to Lusteveco and still attend his regular classes.

Akol stayed at the company or what was left of it after a series of divestment of its non-oil operations—until Cory Aquino was installed president by people power. The divestment resulted in leaving out the Cebu Stevedoring Co. (Cebusteco) which was non-oil and non-sugar operation. Cebusteveco was the company that owned and managed what used to be the Cebu operations of Lusteveco.

Later Cebusteveco would be regrouped with the National Stevedoring and Lighterage Co. (NSLC) and became part of the National Transport Group organized by the National Development Co. from the foreclosed assets of the Lusteveco Group of Companies.

When the Cory Aquino administration launched privatization to raise funds for the cash-starved administration, the workers, staff and executives of NSLC were alarmed when the Cebu Port and Cebu Marine operations of NSLC were bid out on Nov. 28, 1986. The bidding, however, was a failure with only one bidder at P14 million against the indicative price of P30 million.

During this time, Akol was thinking of organizing the workers and buy out the company. The idea of a buy-out was inspired by Pope Leo XIII encyclical rerun navarum that seeks to dignify labor. Also, their backs were at the wall. They were at the brink of losing their jobs.

Akol discussed the idea with Democrito Mendoza, president of the Associated Labor Union (ALU) and chair of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), the largest federation of labor unions in the country. Mendoza liked the idea and both he and Akol swung into action.

They sent NDC a letter of intent for a buy-out by pooling the workers' separation and retirement benefits they estimated would amount to a little over P16 million. This was more than enough to pay for the stocks of NSLC but not enough to put the new company on a sound financial footing.

They also have to contend with Trade Secretary Jose Concepcion, who was chair of NDC. From the beginning, Concepcion was skeptical of the workers enterprise that Mendoza and Akol were trying to sell him. After NDC conducted a formal survey among the workers, majority of whom favored the buy-out, he went unannounced to the pier site and talked one by one to the workers. When finally he realized their sentiments, he asked the Commission on Audit to confirm the buy-out.

The sale of NSLD-CPO was formalized on March 29, 1990 in a memorandum of agreement signed by Concepcion, who signed as chairman of NDC, and Mendoza, who represented the workers.

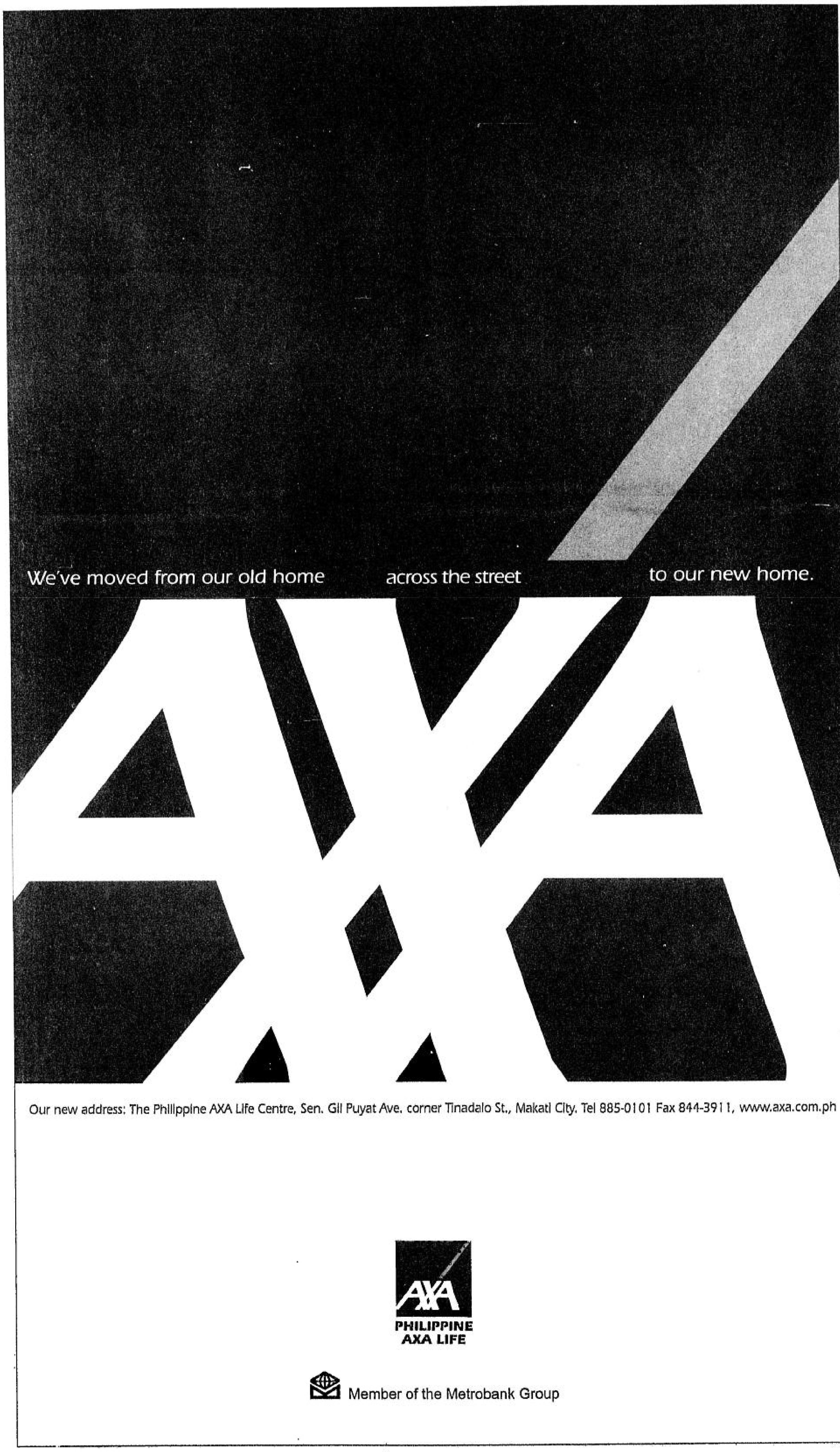
The new corporation was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 19, 1990 capitalized at P12 million. Opascor took over the Cebu International Port operations on June 16, 1990 and was formally presented to the business community on July 20, 1990 at the Cebu Plaza.

P64,000 operating capital

With an operating capital of P64,000, Akol knew that the takeover did not have an auspicious beginning. He had to raise money week after week to pay the workers' wages. The company was also handicapped by dilapidated equipment. The new owners had to work long hours. If they had some misgivings of their decisions to put up the company, nobody was talking.

Akol had to show the workers that he shared the difficulties they were going through. In the first few years of the company, his home was at the back of a warehouse at the port. There were a few amenities. He only transferred residence when the company's finances improved. His transfer was not even easy as he resisted efforts to have him relocated to a new place outside the port. In the end, he relented in keeping with his position in the company.

WORKERS/ C5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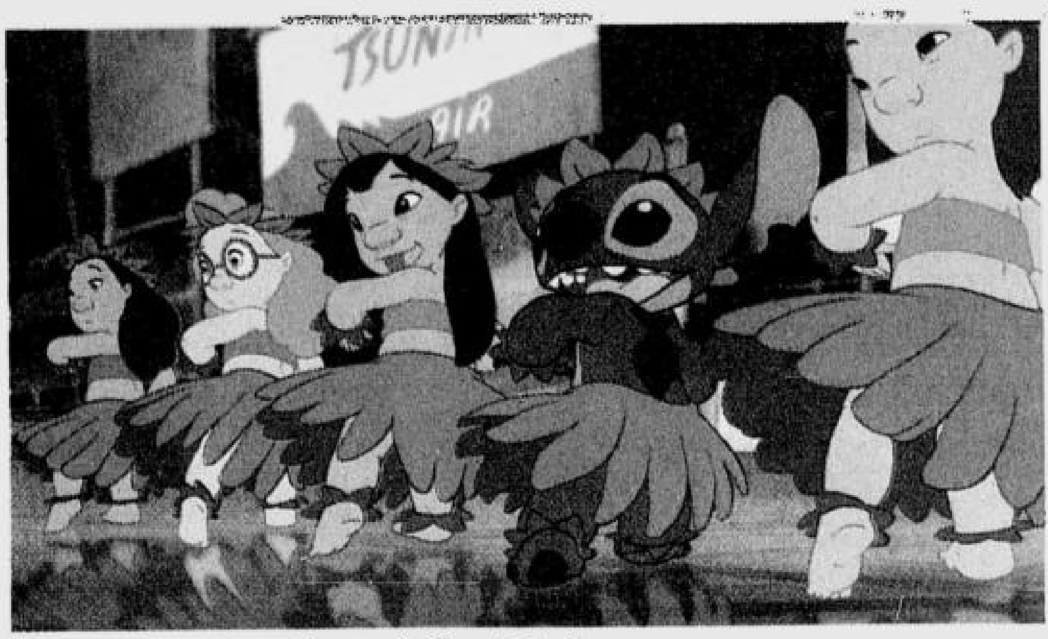

HAWAIIAN girl Lilo and her "dog" Stitch dance the traditional hula in a hilarious scene in Walt Disney's "Lilo & Stitch."

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Veteran Pinoy artist animates 'Lilo & Stitch'

Since 'The Little Mermaid,' Ruben Aquino has been bringing his unique brand of animated magic to the silver screen

By Ruel S. De Vera

POP quiz: What do the Walt Disney characters Simba, Ursula and Captain Shang have in common, aside from being very memorable two-dimensional cartoon characters?

The answer is closer to home than you may imagine. Our Lion King, Sea Witch and friend to Mulan were all animated by the same award-winning supervising Disney animator Ruben Aquino. He also happens to be half-Filipino.

"I've never been to the Philippines myself. We have many relatives there now and we keep in touch with them. Someday I'd like to go there," he says.

For now, animating the creations at the world's most famous animation company tops his agenda.

"I've always loved animation when I was growing up, and I never thought you could make a career out of it," he continues. "It's challenging because you're always learning something. To be a good animator, you have to be so many things. You not only need to draw well, but you have to be an actor or performer. We call ourselves 'actors with pencils.'"

Ruben, 48, has served as supervising animator on such memorable Disney personalities as the adult Simba in "The Lion King," the bulldog Francis in "Oliver and Co.," Belle's father Maurice in "Beauty and the Beast," and of course,

VETERAN/ p.D2

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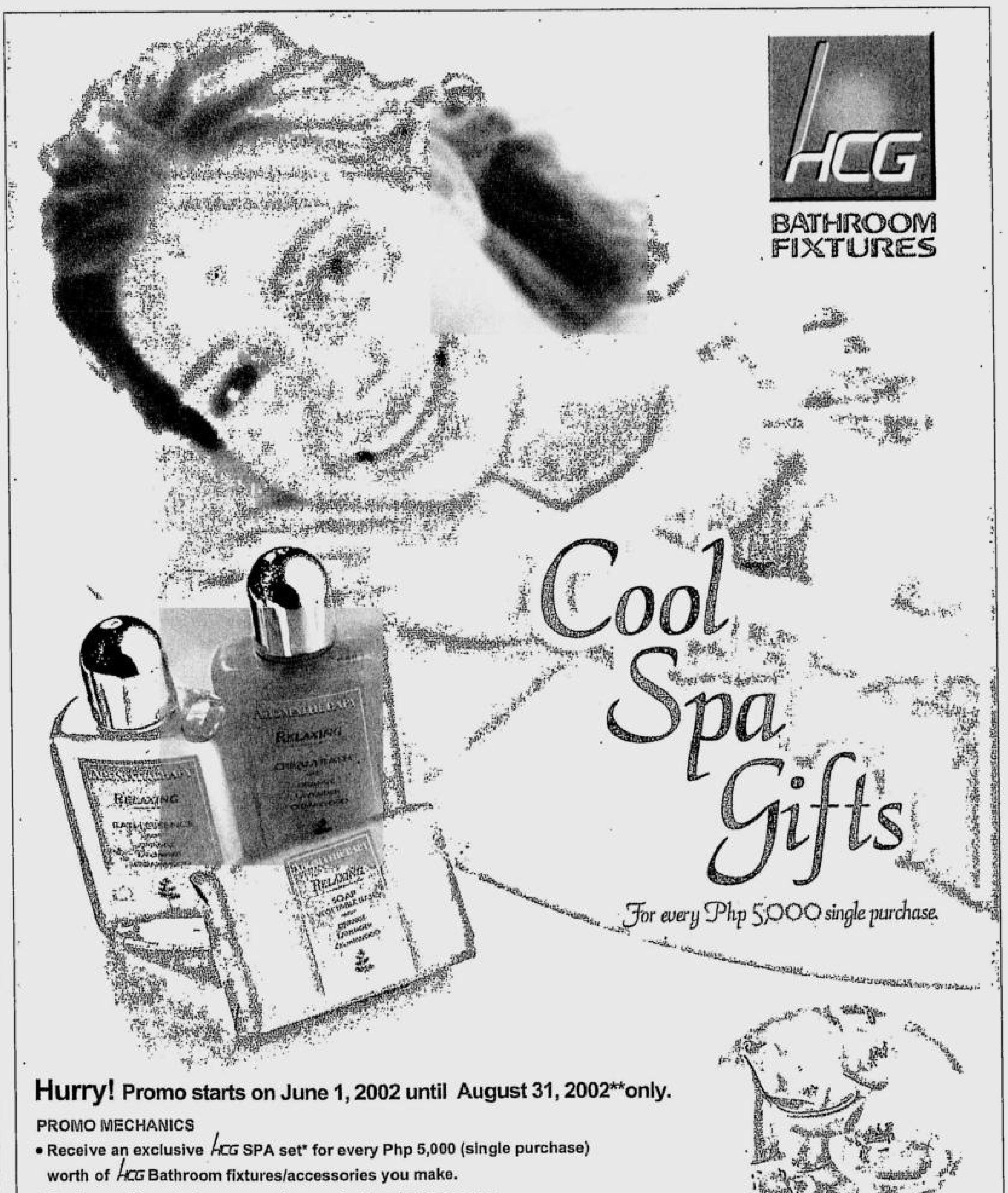

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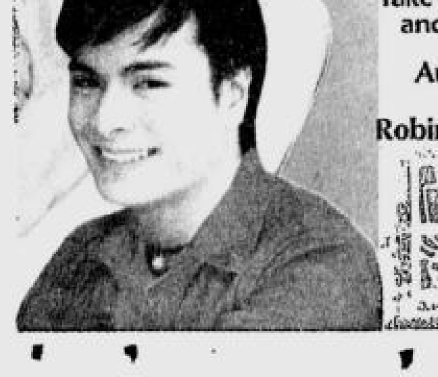

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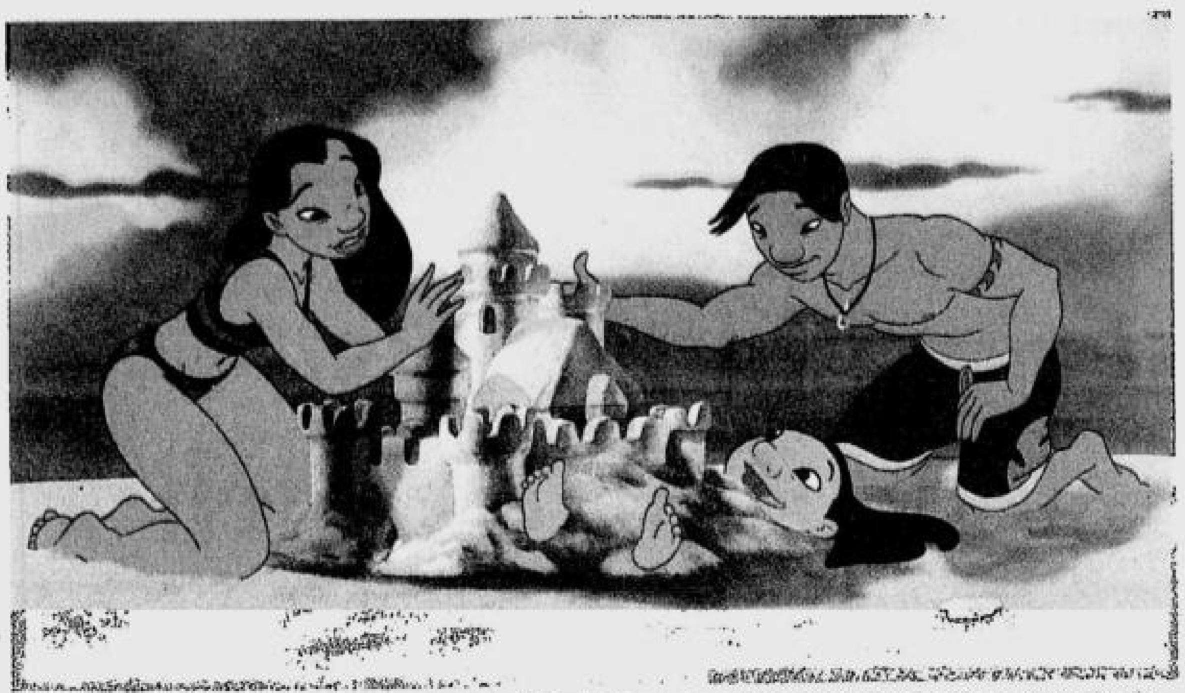
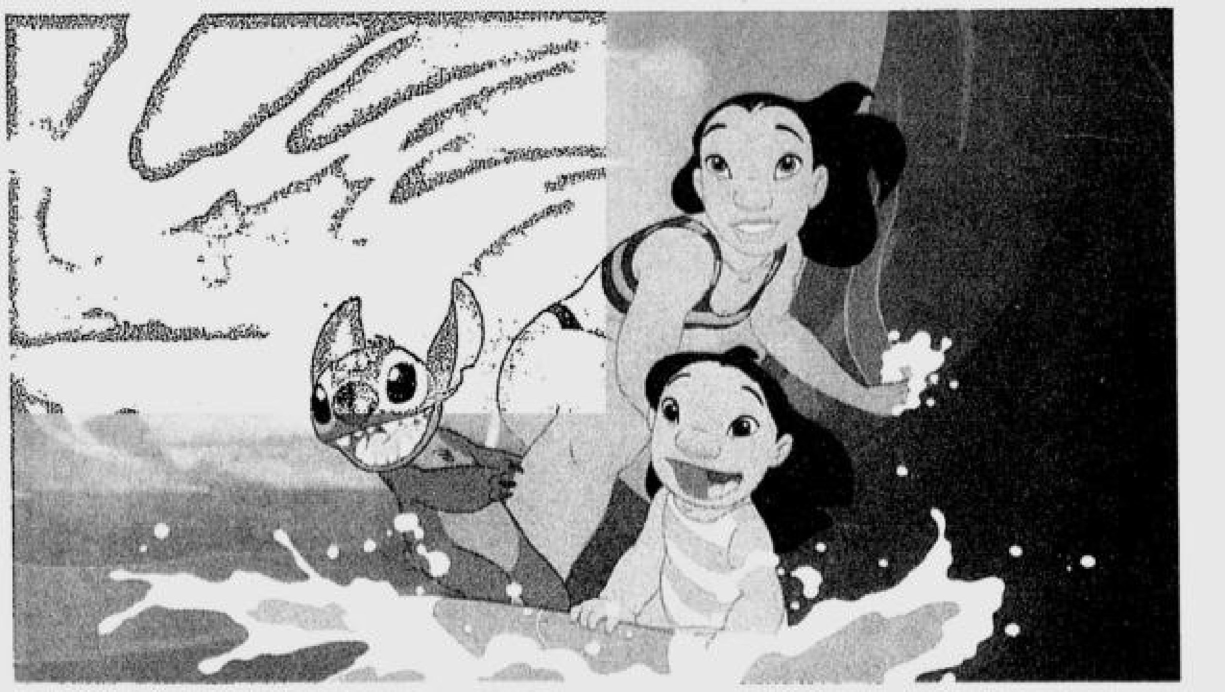


LILO'S sister Nani and her former boyfriend David Kawena enjoy a happy moment as they play in the sand with Lilo. Animator Ruben Aquino, who once lived in Hawaii with his Filipino father and Okinawan mom, supervised the Kawena character.



LILO and her pet Stitch, together with Nani, ride a wave.

Veteran Pinoy artist animates 'Lilo & Stitch'

From page D1

everyone's favorite tentacled villainess, Ursula on "The Little Mermaid." To top it all off, Ruben won an Annie Award in 1998 for his work as supervising animator on the heroic Captain Shang on "Mulan."

Ruben continues to find new challenges in animation as he serves as supervising animator on two different characters in the latest Disney feature, "Lilo & Stitch." He brings to life both the helpful Hawaiian surfer dude David Kawena and the oddly lovable alien Pleakley.

Ruben's father Macario hailed from Mandaluyong (then a town of Rizal province). "My dad was one of many Filipino civilians working for the US Army after the war in Okinawa."

His father settled in Okinawa after marrying Kiyoko Azama. Born in 1953, Ruben was the third of four children. He went to school at a local American Catholic school. "Most of the kids at the school were either Filipino or half-Filipino."

Discovering art

It was in Okinawa that Ruben discovered art. "My father worked in computers but he loved art and he instilled in us a love for art."

Aside from the encouragement and books he got from his father, Ruben also stayed tune to the Disney cartoons on television. "Once in a while, we would also watch Disney features like 'Bambi' and 'Pinocchio' at the bases."

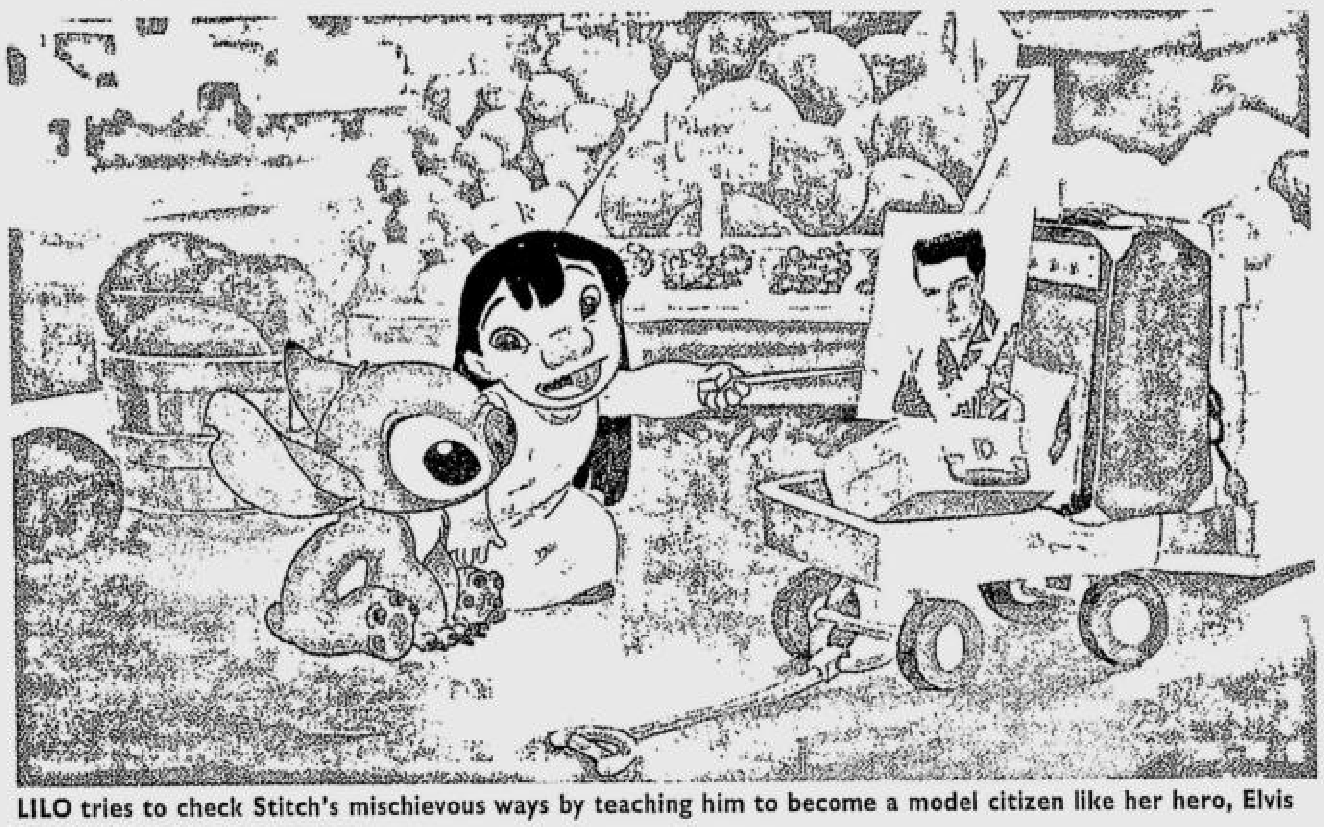
Ruben finally saw all the Disney movies once he moved to the US at age 17. "It was a big move for me," he avers. He took up architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1975. "I couldn't find any work in Philadelphia because we were in a recession."

By then, his parents had moved to Hawaii, so Ruben moved to those islands as well. He stayed there for five years. Still unable to find work as an architect, Ruben worked as a graphic artist.

Then, he discovered Farmhouse Films, an animation company. "I applied for the job and I got it, and that was my first experience with Disney-style animation."

Ruben was part of the package when Farmhouse Films set up shop in Los Angeles, where he soon found himself working on such Saturday morning staples as the "Smurfs."

In 1982, Ruben officially joined the ranks of Walt Disney Feature Animation, rising through the ranks quickly. Among the projects he worked on were "Mickey's Christmas Carol," "The Black Cauldron" and "The Great Mouse Detective."



LILO tries to check Stitch's mischievous ways by teaching him to become a model citizen like her hero, Elvis Presley.

RUBEN Aquino

His career reached a milestone when he became a supervising animator. A supervising animator personally handles the movement and appearance of individual characters. In effect, Ruben was assigned with bringing these scribble images to life and making an audience love them.

Aside from the blockbusters "The Little Mermaid," "Mulan," "The Lion King" and "Beauty and the Beast," Ruben also worked on "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," "The Rescuers Down Under" and "Pocahontas."

Today, he works at Walt Disney Feature Animation's Florida studios. When he's not giving birth to more fantastic animated people, Ruben lives in Orlando with his two cats.

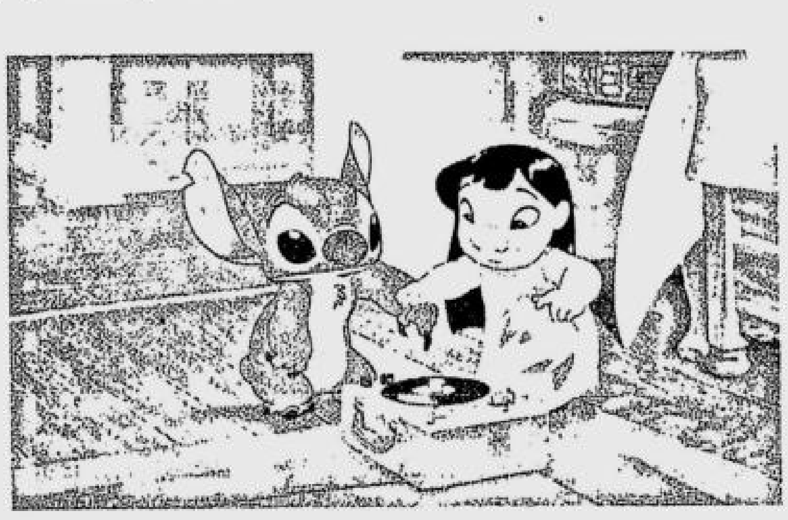
Devotion

He truly devotes himself to his craft. "It's not enough to be able to draw well. You have to get into your characters, know what they're feeling, know what their motivations are. You have to have analytical ability as well because all the movements are done frame by frame, but they have to follow the laws of physics. We can exaggerate, but the real world is the starting point."

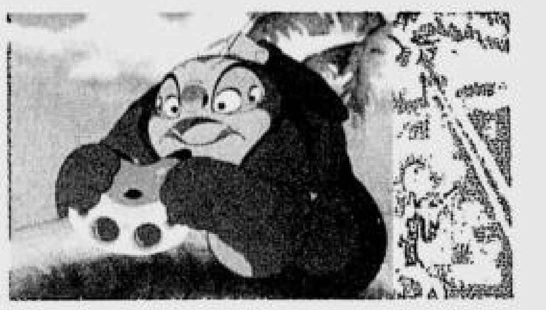
Another thing he enjoys are the surprises that each project brings, something he truly delights in. "Every movie that we do is different. We do that so the audience doesn't get bored. We try to do something the audience hasn't seen before, but it's interesting for us as well."

Something different is right. For "Lilo & Stitch," writers-directors Chris Sanders and Dean Deblois have conjured a gut-busting chase for an irresistibly cute rogue alien on Earth. Add to that the fact that the film is set in the hula-happy island of Hawaii, and the soundtrack is laced with the King's compositions.

Yep, Elvis is the building for this one. Ruben found the subject matter to his liking. "Luckily, I was quite familiar with Hawaii as I lived there for a while."



LILO discovers that Stitch can do a "stupid pet trick" when he uses his nail to play a phonograph record of Elvis Presley's "Hound Dog" and the sound comes out of his mouth.



A MAD scientist, Jumba Jookiba, and an earth enthusiast, Pleakley, pose as tourists as they attempt to capture Stitch and return him to Planet Turo.

While he says animators can animate pretty much anything, it really helps to draw on some personal experience. "As an Asian, I can draw on my background. I went to an international school, and many of my friends were Chinese. I was familiar with the cultures and readily identified with Captain Shang. I had a friend in high school who looked like Captain Shang, in fact, and I remembered how he talked and moved. I lived in Hawaii, so I knew the Hawaiians' facial expressions and mannerisms."

Favorites

Of the myriad characters he's worked on, he has two favorites. The first comes as no surprise: Ursula—"She was so much fun to work on and that was my first big break as far as big characters are concerned." He ranks "Lilo & Stitch's" resident alien and comedy relief Pleakley as a close second. "Being an alien, he moves in a very interesting way. That's a lot of fun to animate."

He considers the movie to be a very good experience for him. In fact, he considers it the high point of his animated experience so far.

The movie employs a throwback approach, from the rounded characters to the watercolor backgrounds, marking another innovative step forward for Walt Disney. "It's the best movie I've worked on, honestly. It's the most original story. It's got the most heart of all the movies I've worked on. But it's just a special film, and I think it represents a resurgence of hand-drawn animation after all these recent computer-animated films."

One can catch Ruben's work when "Lilo & Stitch" opens in Metro Manila theaters on Aug. 14.

He's been with Disney for 20 years now and he fully intends to continue this magic carpet ride as far as it will take him. "It's fantastic. It's so fulfilling. I never dreamt I would be working for Disney. I love the work I'm doing. You touch a lot of lives. People feel like they know you because they love these characters. For an animator, that's very gratifying because you're bringing to life characters others identify with. To do that with pencil and paper, it's almost like magic."

French animation is alive and well

By S.B. Zulueta
Contributor

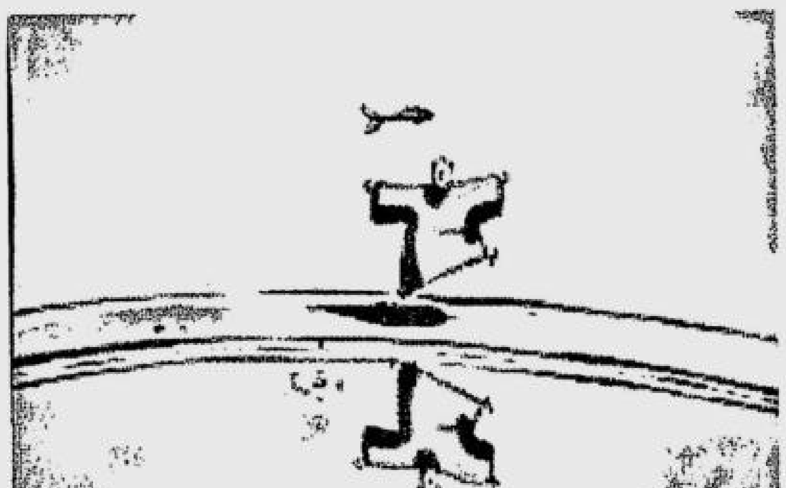
A MEETING recently between the curator of the Annecy Film Festival, the world's foremost festival of animated movies, and Filipino animators provided an idea of the brewing concerns of traditional animators amid the rapid inroads of computer digitalization.

The symposium on animation was organized by the French embassy, with Pinoy Animagination, Holy Cow Animation Inc. and the Animation Council of the Philippines. It was conducted by Emmanuel Gorin of the French embassy, with guest Gilbert Hus, curator for the Annecy retrospective. The affair served as a prelude to the forthcoming Animation Festival the embassy is cooking up for September.

The first question of the open forum—"How do you regard 3D (computer) animation?"—was obviously related to the growing apprehension among 2D (traditional) artists that 3D might replace 2D. To which Hus merely replied that they in Annecy still categorize 3D with 2D along with other animation media. Succinctly he placed the dreaded 3D in its right place: He said it is just a tool.

Regarding the funding of independent films, Hus, who is also an animation producer, commented that while it is true France subsidizes the works of many individual artists, there are also artists who finance their own creations in order to become known.

Their government manages to provide the subsidy of independent films through the taxes imposed on movies and television, he said. It is a self-replenishing scheme. It provides the incentive to produce more, create new entertainment, discover new talents and promote what is French. "It is all a matter of balance."



"LE MOINE et le Poisson"

Hus added that France does co-production not only with European countries like Germany and Italy, but also with Asian countries, particularly Korea. He stressed "co-production, not manufacture."

Among the animation films shown at the symposium was "La Demoiselle et le Violoncelliste (The Young Lady and the Cellist)," 1941, by Jean-François Laguionie. A cellist playing by the sea stirs the waters to turbulence. A woman catching shrimp by the beach is swallowed by the waves. Eventually the cellist also sinks into the sea. And in the peaceful, colorful underwater world the two finally meet.

The look of the film is likely inspired by the naive paintings of Henri Rousseau. The tempest scenes are quite convincing despite being just executed in painted cutouts.

In "Moznosti Dialogu (Dimensions of Dialogue)," 1982, by Jan Svankmajer, the clay figures of a naked man and a woman make love. As they do, their bodies melt into each other and transform into a stirring shapeless mass to signify that in love we lose our "selves" to become one.

Alison De Vere's "Mr. Pascal" (1979) concerns an old cobbler who sits daydreaming outside a church. He takes pity on the Christ nailed on the big crucifix nearby. He helps the Christ down and removes the crown of thorns, which he makes into a warm fire. He bandages his wounds and puts slippers on his feet. Soon tramps and street musicians join them and share in a feast of wine and some bread.

Who says all independent films are dragging, intellectual, nonlinear and ambiguous? "Au Bout du Monde (At the End of the Earth)," 1998, by Konstantin Bronzit, shows the perils of living in a house perched on top of a hill. The trick of balancing the house to prevent it from sliding down on either side makes for irrepressible comedy. This is pure narrative done in traditional drawings.

The occasion also offered the chance to see an early work of Michael Duduk de Wit, "Le Moine et le Poisson (The Monk and the Fish)," 1994.

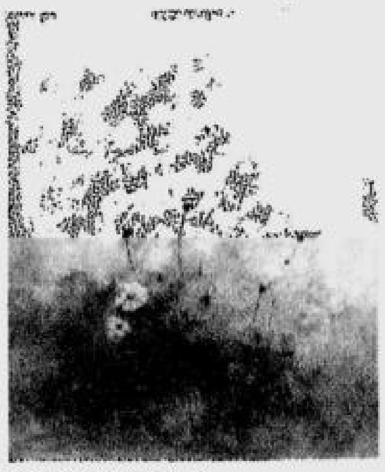
De Wit won the best animated short in the American Oscar last year for "Father and Daughter." This unforgettable piece done in evocative india ink and gouache tells of the poignant story of a daughter who, through the passing of the seasons, yearns for the return of her beloved father. If you missed seeing it in last year's Dutch animation festival, you might be able to catch this gem in the Animation Festival this September. It will include the best of French animation as well as a retrospective of award-winning animation films of the past 10 years from the Annecy Film Festival.

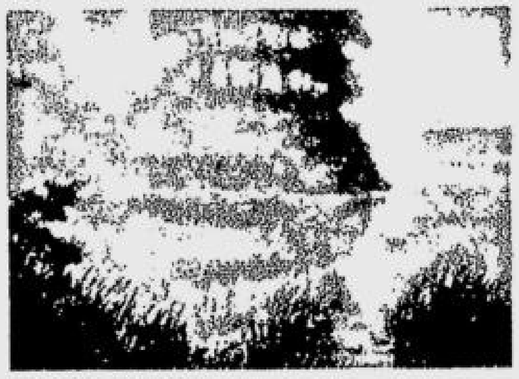
The evanescent beauty of Philippine pastorals

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

IT is his nth solo exhibit, so the artist has scheduled it for his nth birthday on Aug. 7: "The Changing Landscapes" by sculptor-painter Francisco M. Verano, until Aug. 17 at Galerie Y, SM Megamall.

Verano—the new president of the Saturday Group of Artists—first made his name as a sculptor. Years ago, while still a freshman at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, he submitted a small piece of abstract sculpture, "Stone Idol," to the annual competition of the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP).


"JUNGLE Gems"


"REFLECTIONS"

As he was carrying his work to the competition hall, Verano saw a huge work by Napoleon V. Abueva, his professor at UP, being brought in. Intimidated, the young sculptor almost changed his mind about joining the contest. But AAP president Purita Kalaw-Ledesma prevailed upon him to submit his work.

Verano won first prize, beating his mentor Abueva.

He went on to create more sculptural works, including "Bamboo," which used to be with the Cultural Center of the Philippines until it was unceremoniously dismantled.

In this work, the sculptor managed to imbue the fragile medium (bamboo) with a monumental quality.

Drawn to nature from the start, Verano turned to landscape painting, and again won first prize at an AAP competition.

For his latest show, Verano has gathered together some 30 new works, mostly oil pastels.

"I mix oil and pastel and apply these roughly on board," he says, explaining his technique. "Then I scrape with the palette knife to obtain the colors I want, use a thinner, and finally apply the finishing touches."

The end result is that the landscape pastels look like oil or acrylic.

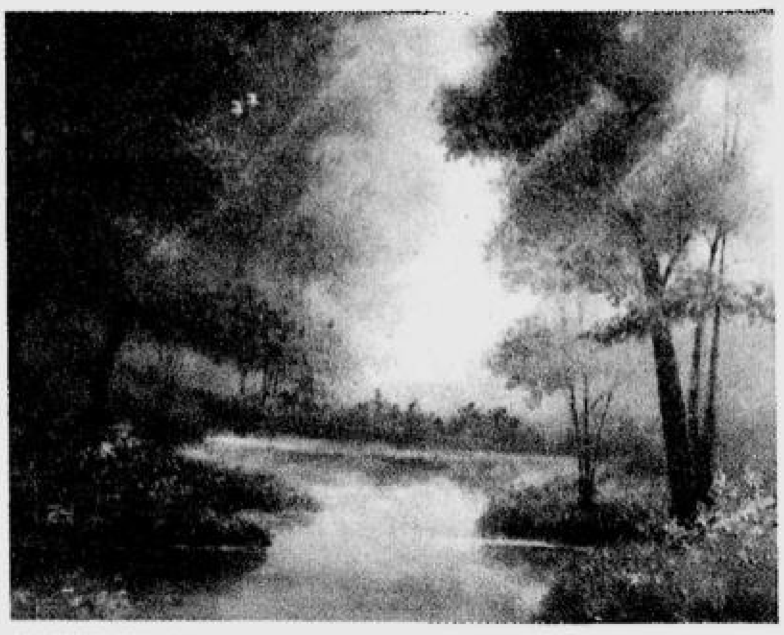
The artist is more of a romantic rather than a realist. He pursues his own vision of beauty, leaving out details he does not like. He prefers to make quick sketches outdoors, then recalls the scene in the tranquility of his studio.

The locales include Tanay Falls in Rizal and the beaches of Batangas. But, you will be surprised, most of them are in Metro Manila: the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center in Quezon City, the Arroceros Park (under threat from the Manila mayor), and the UP Diliman campus.

Verano has given life to the few remaining forested areas in the metropolis.

There are trees, flowers, streams and decorative grass (*talahib*). The colors are warm and cool, depending on the season: yellow, orange, purple, red, white, green and blue.

Like the French Impressionists who captured the evanescent beauty of Paris (summer-spring-autumn), Verano has interpreted the fleeting beauty of our pastoral scenes: from the warmth of summer months to the coolness at year's end.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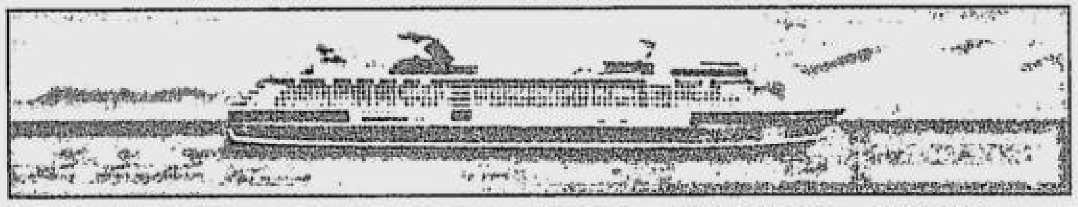

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At 45, Bayanihan spirit lives on

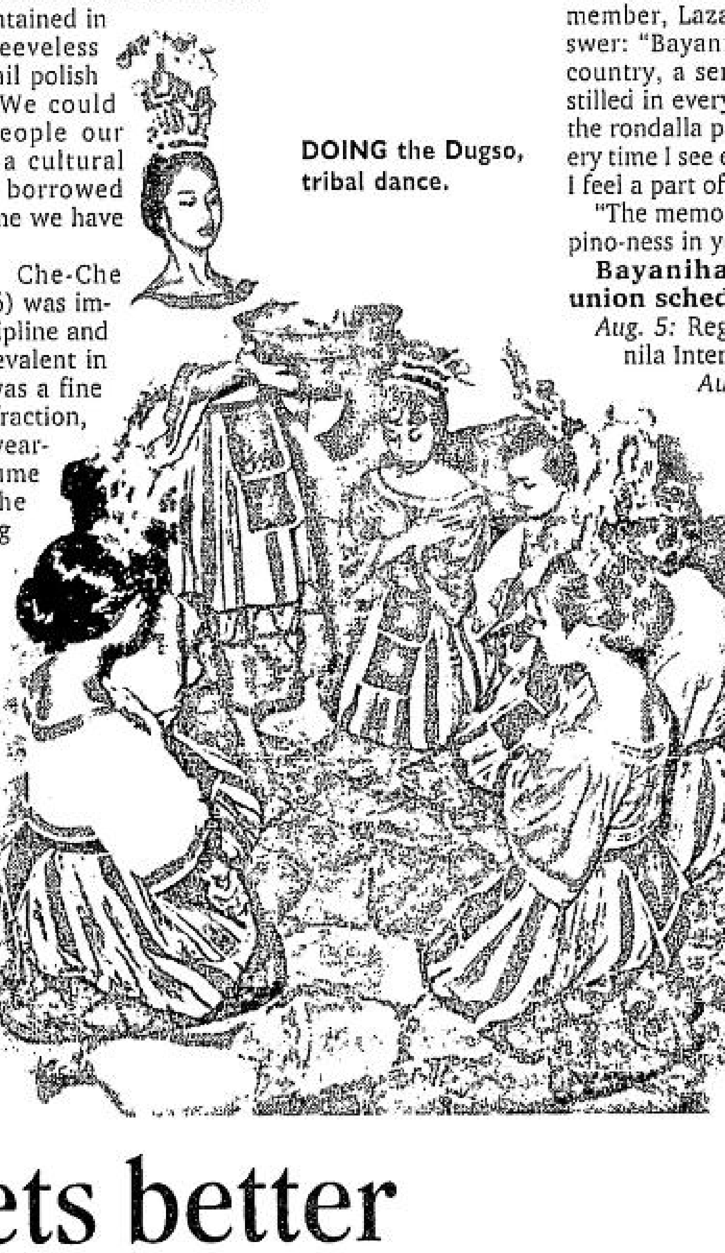
By Cora Llamas
Contributor

BAYANIHAN alumni (from left, standing) Johnny Hubilla, Lenlen Cabili, Che-che Lazaro, Lina Ingo, Lina Wineburnner and Pia Socorro; and (seated) Maribel Dario, Nena Yuson and Lenny Cabili

PHOTO: ROGER CARPIO

DANCING the Muslim suite "Sultana," a royal court dance.

PERFORMING the Polkabal in the Maria Clara suite.



DOING the Dugso, tribal dance.

FOR NEARLY half a century, this dance troupe has been making its country proud. It brought the Philippines to "world-class" status before a younger generation of artists conquered the stages on Broadway and the West End.

As a cultural group—a distinction it bore with dignity, ages before the "Japayuki" phenomenon besmirched it—its members were more than just performers; they were "ambassadors of goodwill." From its inception in 1957 up to the time of then President Fidel V. Ramos in the late '90s, it was a fixture in many presidential state visits.

The curious and the cultured alike can catch a glimpse of what the Bayanihan Philippines National Dance Company stands for in the alumni's week-long celebration of its 45th anniversary Aug. 5-10.

The company has earned a long distinction of "firsts": It's the first Filipino group to perform at the Winter Garden Theater on Broadway; the first non-American dance company to perform in the New York State Theater of the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; the first foreign cultural group to perform in communist Russia and the communist People's Republic of China; the first to make an extensive tour of South America; the first Filipino dance company to perform at the World Showcase Millennium Village Epcot, Disneyworld, Florida; and the only Filipino dance company to receive the Ramon Magsaysay Award for international understanding.

As alumnus Bobby Roces reminisces, "[We've] performed in six continents, including parts of the Middle East and Oceania. The only continent that we've never set foot on is Antarctica… In the US, we've done 12 coast-to-coast tours from 1959 until 2002."

Name a venue no matter how far-fetched or unconventional, and the Bayanihan has staged its well-applauded repertoire of Pinoy ethnic dances in them: a monastery courtyard in Italy, the ramparts of a Moorish castle, a soccer field in Italy, an exhibition hall for horses in some US states, a Spanish bullfight arena, a circus tent in France, the ruins of a Roman theater, a modern Greek amphitheater a presidential yacht.

Reverence

According to its members, present and alumni, the name is still remembered and mentioned with reverence in many countries. One of them is Israel, where the group first performed in kibbutzes in 1959. According to Lenny Cabili, of batch '60 and a mother of four Bayanihan dance artists, the present company would find that their audience is composed of the sons and daughters of the very first Israelis who had watched the group in the '50s.

Just recently, Menchu Tiglao (batch '59-68), president of the Baile Foundation, was stunned when a New York cab driver told her that he was among the Broadway audience who saw the group in the groundbreaking Winter Garden performance.

That show was probably the most intimidating to the young students of the Philippine Women's University on their very first tour overseas, competing with other countries' best and brightest dance talents, most of whom were already ranked in the professional category.

Menchu recounts, "We were on our toes. A Spanish dance company had performed days ahead of us. And while we were saying, '*Ang galing naman nila*,' not long after, it was panned by the critics. The New York critics were tough, and the most feared then was John Martin. Helen [Benitez, PWU chair and Bayanihan founder] said that if we got good reviews, she'd throw us a cast party with champagne. If we got bad reviews, we'd have to settle for vodka and our entire itinerary would be shelved. During the show, when the curtains went down on the first suite, you could hear the resounding applause.

"But our artistic director warned us, 'We're not yet there. You can be a box-office hit, but the critics can still pan you.'" The group had to wait the long excruciating hours for the papers' first edition.

No less than Filipino statesman extraordinaire Carlo P. Romulo broke the news. "I'm sorry to say…" the old man intoned solemnly, giving almost every member a heart attack, "…that the Bayanihan is a success!"

Thirteen out of New York's 14 hard-to-please critics gave it unanimous rave reviews; the 14th was out of town.

Martin himself wrote, "So you think you have seen everything? Well, unless you have seen Bayanihan, you couldn't be more mistaken. It is completely different from anything that has been shown hereabouts and makes for an evening of enchantment. An engrossing evening of theatrical art, beautiful to look at, to listen to and to 'assist' at; it is not only brilliant, but also pervaded by a rare and sweet grace all around!"

The acclaim poured throughout the years. In the '60s, members of an Israeli union who had failed to see the show vowed to hold a strike if the group would not perform one last time.

Twenty years later, the batch of Pia Sacro, who's now the chief of staff of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, was strolling in the same country one Sunday, looking for a church to attend Mass in. When the congregation found out who they were, the group ended up singing "Our Father" in front of the altar.

Mob adulation

In the Philippines itself, crowds would line up—and fill—the Araneta Coliseum. Many others were turned away. In frustration and admiration, one critic of the then leading newspaper Manila Chronicle urged, "If there are no more tickets, break down the doors!"

And the group would not tolerate the discrimination accorded many of our countrymen today. Once, a French hotelier raised his eyebrows and ranted at the group over a minor incident. Benitez, with the Filipino consul in tow, immediately confronted him: "These are ambassadors of goodwill from the Philippines, touring US and now, Europe—and you are treating them this way?"

It wasn't easy to become a member. Maribel Dario (batch '59), director of the Baile Foundation, says, "The auditions were rigorous; some of the judges were prominent society leaders like Luis Araneta and Rolando Tinio. We had ambassadors on the board of judges. Aside from dancing ability, an applicant had to be brought up in a good family scandal-free, and held academic excellence and leadership potentials."

In the old-fashioned, chivalrous '50s, Bayanihan members were discouraged from having boyfriends to prevent the more jealous ones from stopping their girlfriends from joining the tour. While these rules were mercifully dropped in the '80s, Sacro said that the standards were still maintained in other ways: "No sleeveless dresses, shocking nail polish or gaudy makeup.We could never show the people our morning faces. As a cultural group, we flew on borrowed wings. There's a name we have to preserve."

Award-winning Che-Che Lazaro (batch '61-66) was impressed by the "discipline and professionalism" prevalent in the group. "There was a fine system for every infraction, such as tardiness, wearing the wrong costume or not knowing the lines of the song when you need to."

Aside from Lazaro, other famous alumni of the Bayanihan company include: Edith Oliveros, founding director of the Philippine School of Interior Design; Ballet Philippines founding artistic director Alice Reyes; Ramon Obusan of the dance group of the same name; Mayor Atienza; Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Lacson; Misamis Oriental Vice Governor Mike de Jesus; Davao couturier Boy Guino-o; CCP Gawad Awardee (for technical direction) Teddy Hilado.

Asked what the entire Bayanihan experience meant for the country as well for each member, Lazaro probably has the best answer: "Bayanihan contributed to a love of country, a sense of nationalism. It was instilled in every beginning of the show, when the rondalla played the national anthem. Every time I see ethnic dances being performed, I feel a part of it, I feel proud to be Filipino.

"The memories of Bayanihan keep the Filipino-ness in you."

Bayanihan 45th Anniversary Reunion schedule of activities:

Aug. 5: Registration and orientation, Manila Intercontinental Hotel, 3-7 p.m.

Aug. 6: "Ugnayan at Kaisahan" (An Exploration of Philippine Culture), Ramon Obusan Center, 7 a.m.

Aug. 7: Kasuutan Bayanihan Costume Collection at Museo ng Maynila and Exhibit on "The History of the Filipino People" at the National Museum, 8:30 a.m.

Bayanihan Show with welcome cocktails and launching of Bayanihan Dance Instruction Series, CCP Main Theater, 6 p.m. Open to the public

Aug. 8: "Balik-Pugad," 2:30 p.m. (bus call)

Aug. 9: "Pista sa Maynila," Century Park Hotel Ballroom, 7 p.m.

Aug. 10: Picnic at Villa Escudero—8 a.m.

For details, call 895-2021 or 895-8184.

Filipino vocal instrument gets better

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

KAMMERCHOR Stuttgart

MONDAY last week, a Filipino chamber choir opened the program for a visiting German choir and sang Filipino worship songs, contrasting with a foreign composer's Mass in the first part of the concert.

There was nothing unusual in this, except that the Filipino choir's front act (that's the show biz term for anyone opening somebody's major concert) inevitably invited attention to the fact that Filipino voices seemed at par with and, at some point even better than, some foreign counterparts.

Last week's return engagement of Kammerchor Stuttgart under Frieder Bernius was another unforgettable choral experience, starting with Frank Martin's Mass for Two Four-Part Choirs and Edward Elgar's Four Choral Songs Op. 53. The ensemble singing was formidable and, in the excellent acoustics of the Philamlife Theater, you could savor every choral nuance with magical result.

But the opening numbers of the Ateneo Chamber Singers (Estrada's "Awit sa Panginoon," Calalang's "Pater Noster" and Cayabyab's "Aba Po, Santa Mariang Reyna") had such ravishing impact you began to look for that sound that was noticeably our own.

This brings me to the subject of the Filipino vocal instrument that enraptured audiences in another continent.

While the voices of tenor Otoniel Gonzaga and baritone Jonathan Zaens continue to dazzle European audiences, as did soprano Andion Fernandez's in Berlin, bass baritone Andrew Fernando was making waves in the last two seasons of Opera Pacific in California, while tenor Gary del Rosario just wrapped up a Verdi role with Cleveland Opera and is now singing a major part in "The Mikado" in the same turf (he will be heard in a PPO season Nov. 6).

Does that leave our home-based singers behind?

Not quite. Manila-based tenor Lemuel de la Cruz, who teaches at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory, is back in Singapore in a minor role in another production of "Carmen." But he is also an understudy for the part of Don Jose.

He will be a soloist of the national choir in Singapore a month later, then he will have another engagement in Tokyo and work with the Bangkok Symphony in November (along with soprano Rachelle Gerodias, who also teaches at UST). He goes back to Singapore in December as soloist in Bach's "Magnificat" after a guest appearance with soprano Eleonor Calbes at the Philamlife.

It is a busy year for the Ilocano tenor who, last April, was given a rousing standing ovation during his first public solo recital at the First Pasig Summer Music Festival. De la Cruz has kept a low profile in the last couple of years, but his latest performances indicate he is ready to become a major recitalist and should be heard more nationwide.

It seems that our current batch of singers is doing better in the international music scene than our instrumentalists. There is hope that promising Namcya winners Oliver Salonga (piano category), Chino Gutierrez and a niece of National Artist Antonino Buenaventura (violin), Victor Michael Coo (cello) and, hopefully, Gerard Moses Villanueva (clarinet) will do better than their older counterparts.

> Filipino voices seem at par with—sometimes even better than—some foreign counterparts

What does this say of the Filipino vocal instrument?

Properly trained and honed, the Filipino singer remains a listener's delight anywhere in the world.

When I first heard Andrew Fernando, who will sing Aug. 27 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, accompanied by pianist Najib Ismail, I thought that he was one baritone who could give tenors and sopranos an equal fight in the vocal arena (Filipinos are suckers for tenors and sopranos, but generally lukewarm toward baritones and mezzos).

After I heard Fernando at the CCP with the UST Orchestra, I asked him to close a program for young prize-winners at the Philamlife. He was a big hit. I brought him to Bacolod and Cebu. The moment he opened his mouth, there was no further doubt the baritone was made of formidable vocal stuff.

In my last outreach concert in Legazpi City, Fernando was not feeling well and wanted to cancel. We spent the whole day applying assorted medication. On the night of the concert, he was honest enough to tell me, "Mr. Tariman, I am not sure how I will fare tonight but I will try my best." Even at his less ideal condition, Fernando delivered and, to his surprise, was greeted with a standing ovation by Albayanons who heard a world-class baritone for the first time.

After that Albay stint, Fernando was heard again in the cast of "Salome" mounted by the Hong Kong Arts Festival. He recently sang the role of Marullo ("Rigoletto"), Zaretsky ("Eugene Onegin") and the Prison Guard in "Dead Man Walking" for the California-based Opera Pacific.

King of Opera Placido Domingo heard Fernando recently in California, and asked the Filipino baritone to audition for the San Francisco Opera.

(It will be remembered that Domingo was also impressed by Filipino tenor Gonzaga, whom he heard in a major role in "Rigoletto" in Hamburg. Quickly Domingo advised Gonzaga to audition for the New York City Opera. At the New York audition, the Filipino tenor bagged a major role in "Attila" that became his New York City Opera debut.)

Whether Fernando makes it to the San Francisco Opera or not is beside the point (the first and the last Filipino to sing there was Evelyn Mandac opposite Domingo himself in Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine"). Domingo's recommendation to this audition is like getting an entry to a competition named after this eminent Spanish singer (Andion Fernandez is a winner in the *zarzuela* category of the Placido Domingo Operalia).

These impressive performances by Filipino artists should convince us that they are worth keeping and patronizing despite the current economic and political disarray in our national life.

Here and There

THE MCO Arts Festival 2002 opens with the performance of the University of the East Chorale at the Francisco Santiago Hall 7 p.m., Aug. 17. For inquiries, call 818-1403.

Pianist Reynaldo Reyes goes solo on a concert called "Variations Recital" at the Abelardo Hall on Aug. 8 and will team up with pianist Nita Abrogar Quinto on Aug. 22, same venue, in an evening of Mozart, Saint-Saens, Chopin and Brahms. For the Aug. 8 recital, the program consists of Rameau's Gavotte with Variations in A Major, Tchaikovsky's Theme et Variations Op. 19, Kasilag's Theme and Variations on "Walay Angay," Poulenc's "Theme Varie," Brahms' Variations on a Theme by Paganini Op. 35, and Schumann's Symphonic Variations.

The PPO opens its 2002-2003 season on Sept. 13 with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with soloists Nolyn Cabahug, Aileen Espinosa Cura, Agnes Barredo and Laurence Jatayna. For its next concert on Oct. 11, the PPO will harness soloists from its own ranks namely Fredeline Parin (trumpet), Ariel Sta. Ana (clarinet), Adolfo Mendoza (bassoon) and Lourdes de Leon Gregorio (harp) in the performance of Strauss' Concertino for Clarinet, Bassoon, Harp and Strings, all under the baton of Ruggero Barbieri, whose appointment as PPO's music director has been extended to the year 2004.

'Lion' roars again

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

IT'S the third time out for Aslan, the saintly, valiant and courageous protector and keeper of Narnia, in Trumpets' production of C.S. Lewis' religious-fantasy children's epic "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" this month.

"Lion," as the Trumpets people fondly call their show, has always been a hit. Chances are, it will be again this year, if one were only to go by public demand. According to artistic director Audie Gemora, who has played and will essay the Lion again this year, more than 30 shows had been booked even before the show went into pre-production.

Expectations and enthusiasm are running high. This is hardly surprising, since "Lion" is at its heart a message of hope.

Set in World War II London, four lonely children, safely heralded into a relative's home to escape the bombings, discover an enchanted closet that opens into a magical world of talking animals, mythical creatures, evil if lovely witches, and noble, sacrificial lions. This journey, though, is not an escape, but a coming-of-age experience for the four youngsters who will learn the hard, if fun, way the age-old lessons of loyalty, selflessness, courage and faith.

By the time Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy return to the so-called real world, they've grown a little bit wiser but not necessarily sadder. The ending implies that they have captured that wonder of life that has pervaded every corner of Narnia and will bring it home, where their newly learned lessons will really count.

Journey

As director and co-writer Jaime del Mundo says, "The whole point of the play is that it is a journey. Why go to Narnia if [at the end] you can't make the world a better place?"

Del Mundo also hates "repeating myself." While the basic script has remained pretty much the same, a new cast is expected to breathe new life and perhaps even new interpretations into the production.

Meynard Peñalosa, the stalwart seasoned thespian from Dulaang UP and Repertory Philippines, takes center stage (with Gemora) as Aslan the Lion. Taking on the roles of the lovely but dastardly White Witch, who blights the once vibrant Aslan with an endless winter, are celebrated stage leading ladies Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo and Carla Martinez. Carlo Orosa once again reprises the role of Tumnus the Faun, along with Roy Rolloda who made a splash as the more timid half of the Siamese twins in Singapore Action Theater's "Chang and Eng."

After a lengthy, intensive audition, the following child actors were chosen for the important parts of the youngsters who accidentally stumbled into Narnia: Franco Mabanta, Miguel Rivera and Paolo Valenciano (yup, Gary's son) as the responsible Peter; Tanya Manalang and Crisel Consunji as Susan; Maureen Guese, Cheska Ortega and Alexa Ortega as Lucy; and Sam Concepcion, Javvy Ortega and Iñaki Ting as the brash, impulsive Edmund.

Design wunderkind

But probably the main attraction is the refurbished production design of theater wunderkind Mio Infante. In the past years, "Lion" dazzled its audiences by bringing a fantasy world to life, minus the million-dollar pyrotechnics that its richer counterparts overseas regularly use. Dead winter turns into the green colors of spring at the roll of a carpet.

Subtle, dusky lighting focused on a certain point on stage can give the impression of a limitless horizon that the children are about to traverse. The transformation into a magical vista was so convincing that audiences loved it during the first two runs. "Lion's" production design has always been cited as one of its strengths.

Yet, like his director, Infante does not wish to rest on past laurels. He promises that the new "Lion" will get the audience more involved and immersed in its mythical dimensions, despite what co-writer Luna Inocian describes as a "budget cut."

The claustrophobia, coldness and dreariness of World War II London, which the kids desperately want to leave behind, will be more severe and felt. Thus, it will stand out in stark contrast against Narnia with its shades of red, orange and green, and singing beavers, Christmas-garbed gentlemen, and slimy, serpent-like demons.

A huge revolving stage at the center will effect the changes from the real world to Narnia's springtime, the White Witch's demonic enclave, and the lush battlefield where the kingdom's destiny is finally decided. Aside from being fast, it will encompass the entire Meralco stage, creating a panorama-like effect designed to hold the audience's attention.

In past "Lion" versions, the changes were made simply by the lifting of a huge panel or the movement of the small closet into center stage. This still looks stagey and sometimes can slow down the audience's suspension of belief.

MR. and Mrs. Beaver and the children, Peter, Edmund, Susan and Lucy in Trumpets' "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"

LUCY discovers a closet that opens into a magical world.

This time, the closet becomes a central and enormous action figure (in a manner of speaking), transcending its mere role as a portal, to bring the characters and the audience into their different playing grounds. The suspension of belief should be faster, if not total.

Challenge

"Audie has always challenged us, 'Can we do something else?'" Infante remembers about the way the creative team tried to break new ground and push the envelope, in spite of the show's acclaim and success.

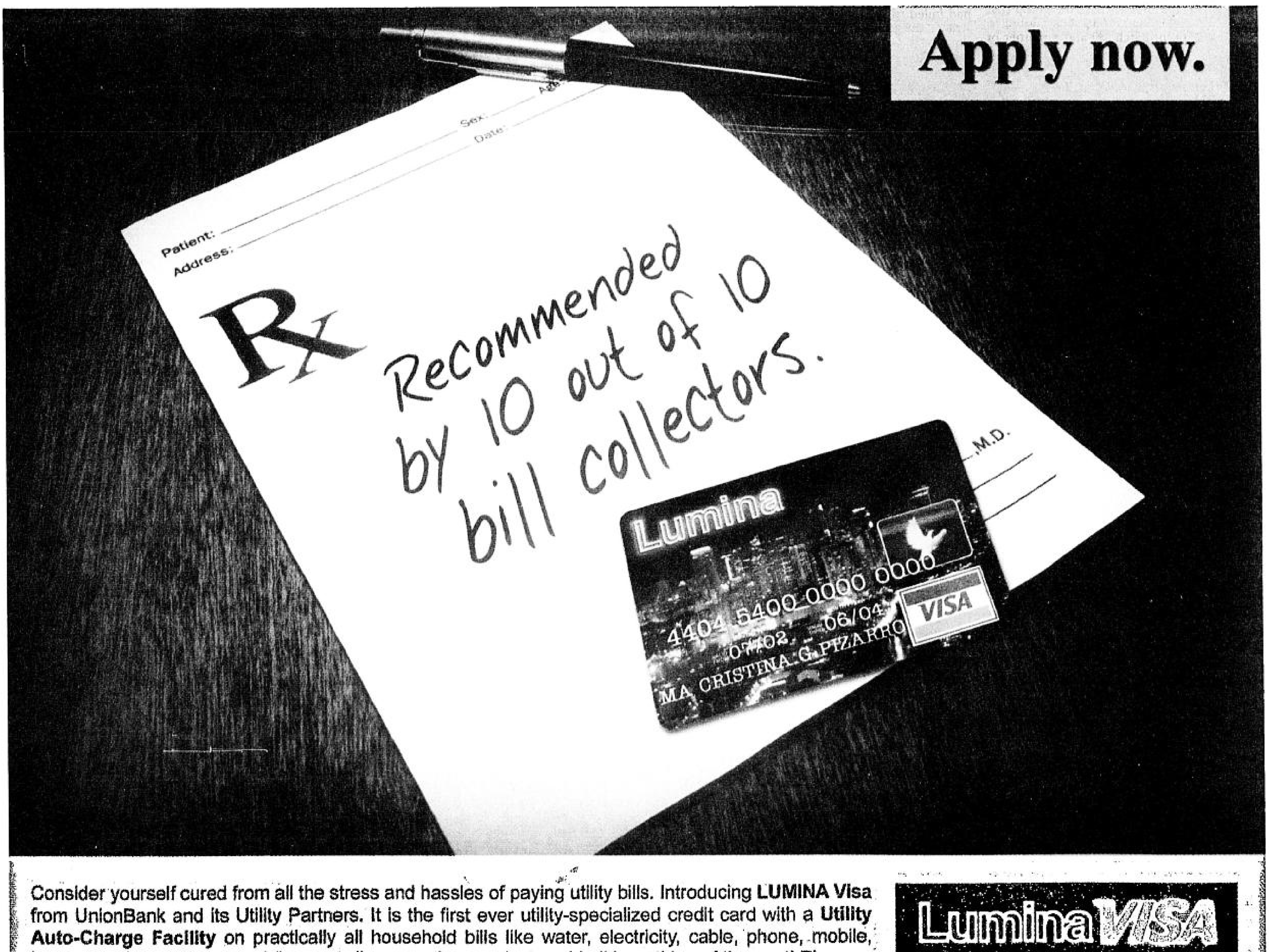
Maybe it's just as well. Children are becoming hard to please these days. The immersion into a vicarious world has to be real and exciting if they are to take part in it. Electronic entertainment in its various forms has thrown down the gauntlet.

After slumbering for decades, the fantasy mythos is finally taking off in film (the success of "Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter"), with more legends and their copycats in the Hollywood punch line. Rumor has it that a major studio has bought the film rights to "Lion" and will be mounting its own version soon.

Trumpets' creative team, though, isn't fazed by these high-tech complications running their way. After all, they mounted a Filipino version of this British children's classic at a time when nobody—not even the UK company holding the rights—thought that it could work. Only last year, the stepson of C.S. Lewis himself said that the Pinoy "Lion" was the best musical interpretation he has seen so far (there are two others: the American and the Brit).

As Gemora could proudly claim, "Remember: we were here first!"

Trumpets' "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" runs at the Meralco Theater until Sept. 15. Call 633-5010.



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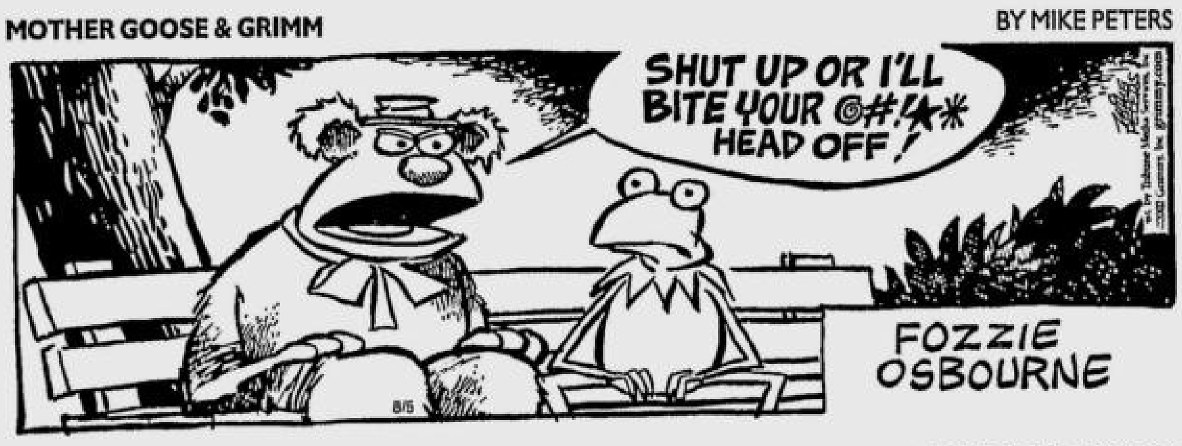
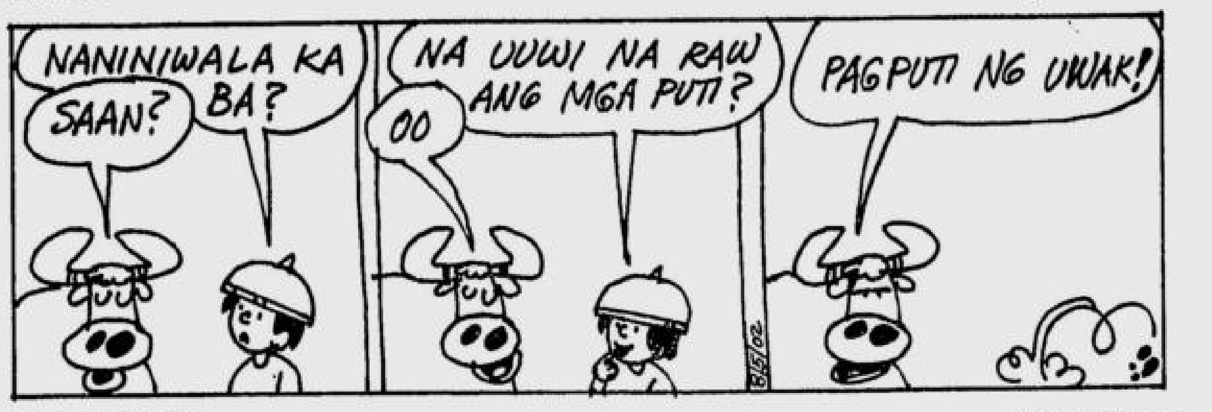
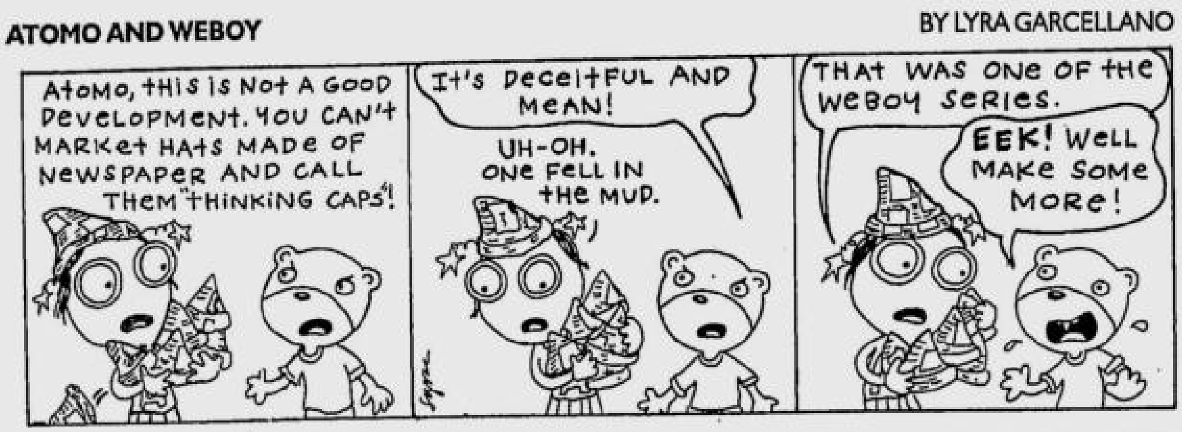
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM
BY MIKE PETERS


SHUT UP OR I'LL BITE YOUR @#!★* HEAD OFF!
FOZZIE OSBOURNE
8/5

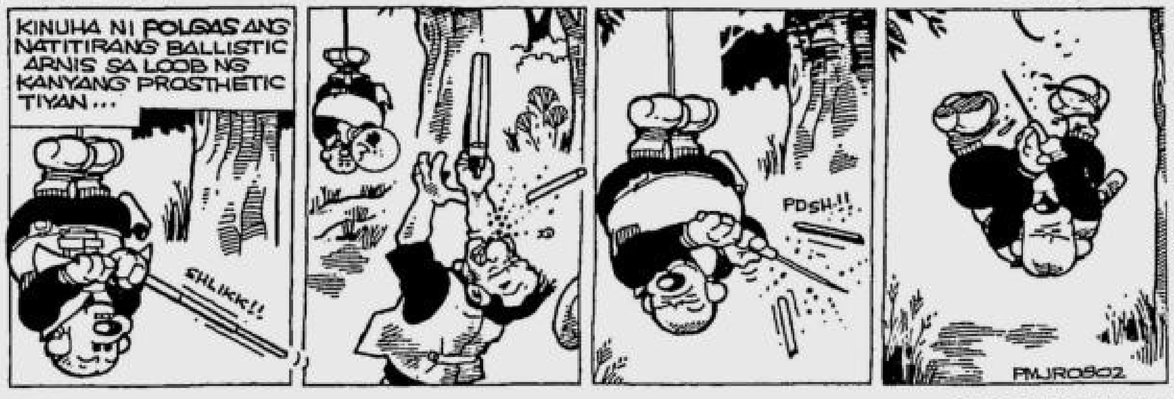
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


NANINIWALA KA BA?
SAAN?
NA UUWI NA RAW ANG MGA PUTI?
OO
PAG PUTI NG UWAK!
8/5/02

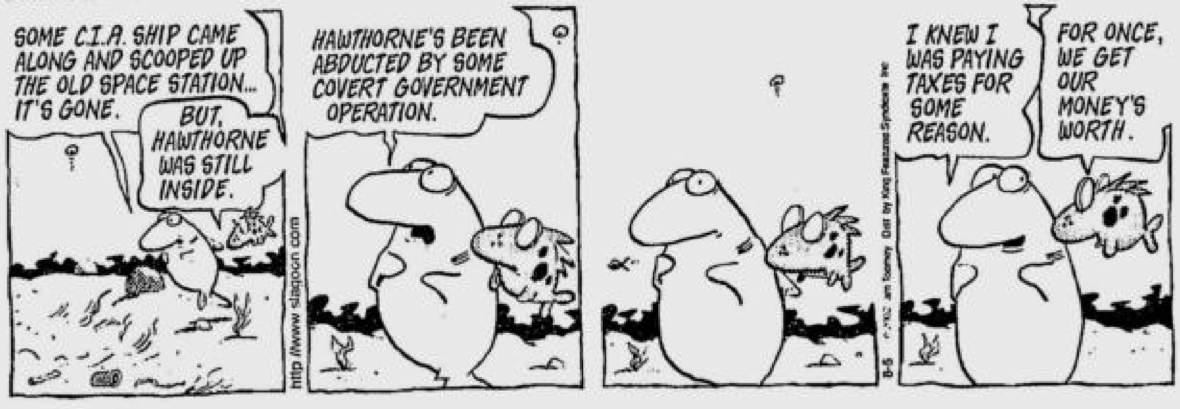
ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Atomo, this is Not A Good Development. You can't market hats made of newspaper and call them "thinking caps"!
It's deceitful and mean!
UH-OH. ONE FELL IN THE MUD.
THAT WAS ONE OF THE WEBOY SERIES.
EEK! Well make some more!

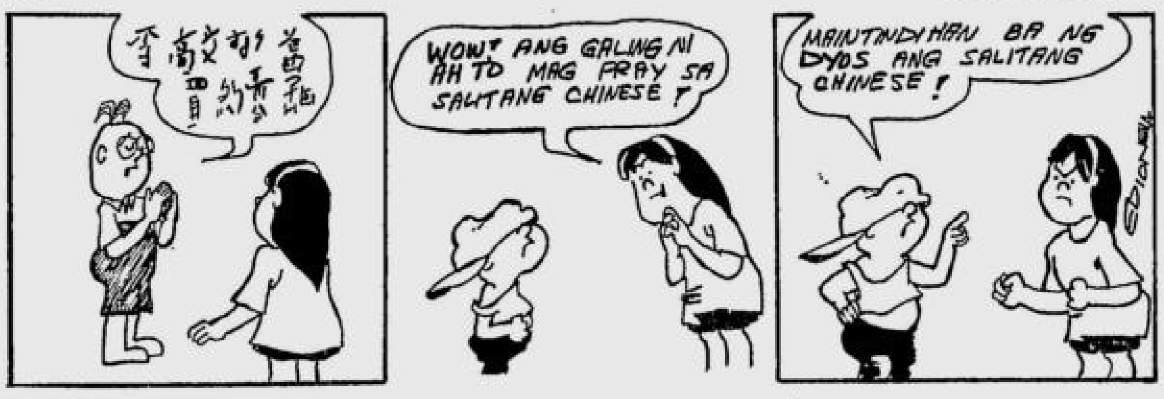
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


KINUHA NI POLGAS ANG NATITIRANG BALLISTIC ARNIS SA LOOB NG KANYANG PROSTHETIC TIYAN...
SHLIKK!!
PDSH!!
PMJR0802

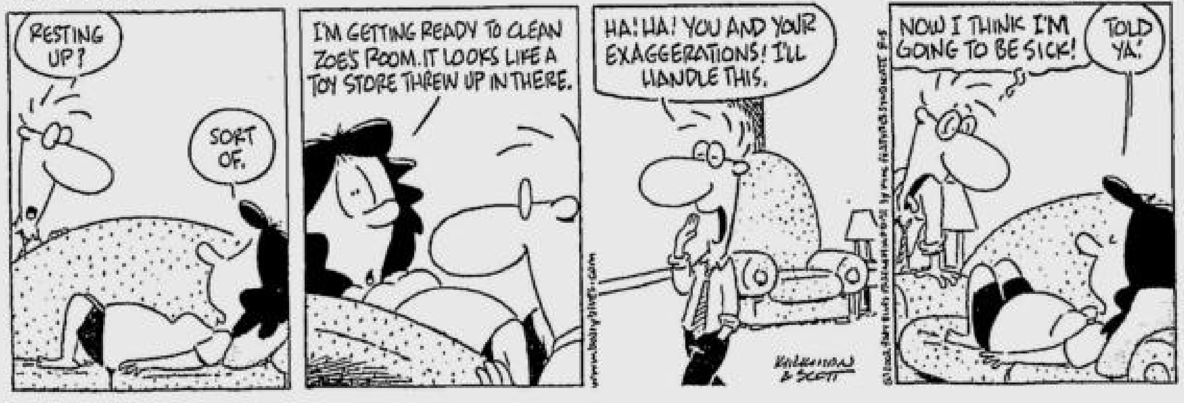
SHERMAN'S LAGOON
BY JIM TOOMEY


SOME C.I.A. SHIP CAME ALONG AND SCOOPED UP THE OLD SPACE STATION... IT'S GONE.
BUT, HAWTHORNE WAS STILL INSIDE.
HAWTHORNE'S BEEN ABDUCTED BY SOME COVERT GOVERNMENT OPERATION.
I KNEW I WAS PAYING TAXES FOR SOME REASON.
FOR ONCE, WE GET OUR MONEY'S WORTH.
http://www.slagoon.com
8-5

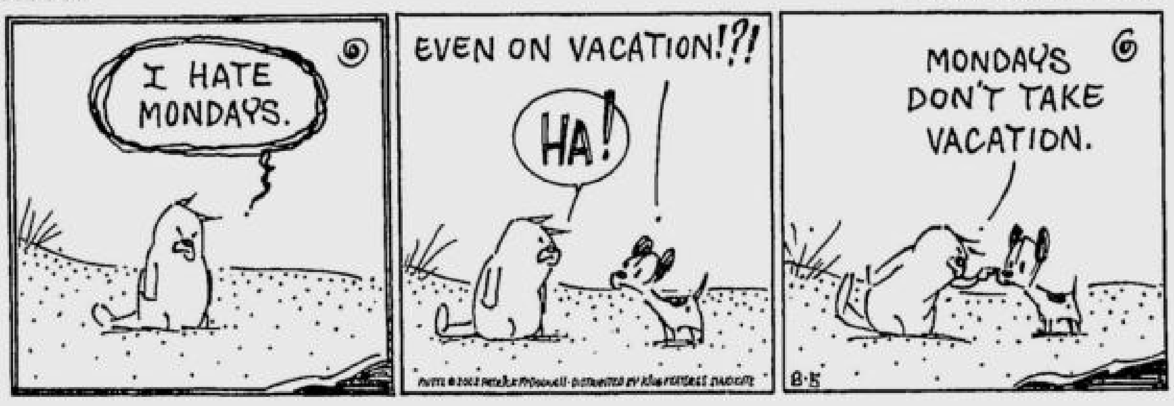
SIMO
BY EDGAR DIONELA


WOW! ANG GALING NI AH TO MAG PRAY SA SALITANG CHINESE!
MAINTINDIHAN BA NG DYOS ANG SALITANG CHINESE!
EDIONELA

BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


RESTING UP?
SORT OF.
I'M GETTING READY TO CLEAN ZOE'S ROOM. IT LOOKS LIKE A TOY STORE THREW UP IN THERE.
HA! HA! YOU AND YOUR EXAGGERATIONS! I'LL HANDLE THIS.
NOW I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK!
TOLD YA!
www.babyblues.com
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNEL


I HATE MONDAYS.
EVEN ON VACATION!?!
HA!
MONDAYS DON'T TAKE VACATION.
8-5

HOROSCOPE
BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Loni Anderson, John Huston, Neil Armstrong, Ami Foster

Happy Birthday: If you want something done this year you had better do it yourself. You usually have better luck getting others to come to your rescue, but this year it will be your turn to do everything. This is a year to realize your full potential and initiate the dreams that you had in younger years. Your numbers are 7, 12, 19, 23, 28, 34

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Get involved with an organization that has the same belief system as yours. Don't be afraid to ask for favors or to take on a leadership position.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your determination and drive will push you to work long hours and go beyond the call of duty to accomplish your goals. You should be able to put some of your unique ideas into play.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll be feeling a little anxious today, so get out and get physical. Express yourself creatively today and you will feel satisfaction. Consider redecorating your space.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should probably change your mental outlook and rid yourself of anything that is not to your benefit. Secret information will preoccupy your mind. Your opinion about someone may change .

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You know what other people want and how to please them. You will find it easy to meet new partners or to charm the one you already have. This is a great day to talk about the way you feel.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You must give the people in your life a chance today. Learn to bend and compromise; push your opinions and you can expect to suffer the consequences.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't get fooled into believing that you must follow someone else in order to be enlightened. You must believe in yourself. You've got what it takes to lead.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will spend money on home improvements or items for your home today. You will prosper if you get involved in anything to do with real estate, food, domestic products, hospitals or a small home-based business.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll have a serious attitude and won't joke around today. You'll prefer to stay calm and work diligently to achieve your goals in the shortest amount of time. Keep in mind that not everyone will want to work as hard as you do.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will have a problem with some of the people you work with today. You must not divulge your career plans or your ideas to those who may try to take credit for your work. If someone criticizes you, don't get angry.

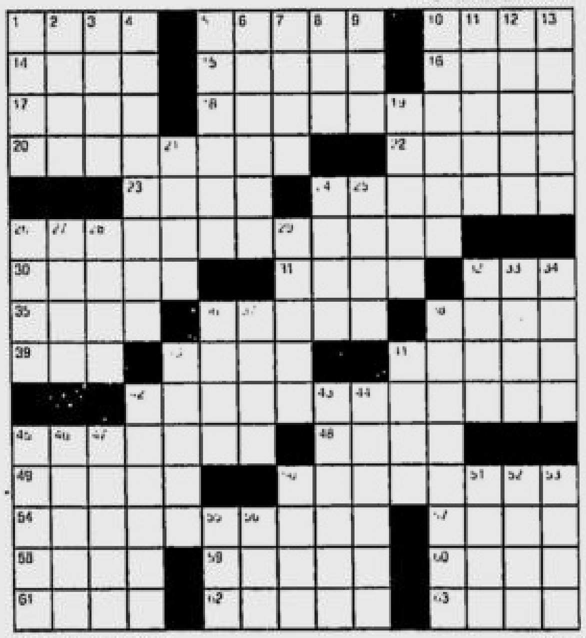
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will do well with moneymaking ventures, so don't pass on an opportunity. Self-improvement projects will turn out much better than you thought.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): This is not the day to deal with home, family, partners or position. This is also not the time to initiate personal changes. Back up and let things develop naturally.

Birthday Baby: You will be playful, industrious and conscientious about everything you do. You will learn quickly, and your skills will lead you to develop your true talents.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA

8/5/02

ACROSS
1 Chicago slugger Sammy
5 Texas A&M student
10 Horse's foot
14 Reindeer herdsman
15 Intoxicated
16 Sikkim's continent
17 Buckeye State
18 Costume party
20 Colt fixer
22 Brightest star in Orion
23 Actress Spelling
24 Carpentry tools
26 Friction-reducing orbs
30 Climbing plants
31 Crack shots
32 Hitter's stat
35 Conway and Curry
36 Opposing teams
38 Barak of Israel
39 A Gabor
40 Location of Bamako
41 Abrasive cloth
42 Sphere that gets banked
45 Narrow valleys
48 Walking stick
49 Clay-and-straw brick
50 In these times
54 Human dynamo
57 Operatic prima donna
58 Feed the kitty
59 Marriage announcement
60 Garden of __
61 Throw away
62 That is (to say): Lat.
63 Writing table

DOWN
1 Work hard
2 Waikiki's island
3 Joyride
4 Twelve disciples
5 Look up to
6 Ars __ artis
7 Spurt
8 Squid fluid
9 Scrimp
10 Established customs
11 Missouri river
12 Tanker
13 Plummets
19 Patent medicines
21 Disorderly crowds
24 Jambalaya ingredient
25 Binary digits
26 Mouthful
27 Tel __-Jaffa
28 Peru's capital
29 Diameter halves
32 Ostrichlike bird
33 Folksinger Ives
34 Pastoral poem
36 Vendor's aim
37 Ailments
38 Implanted
40 Actor Sal
41 __ St. Vincent Millay
42 Gideons' gifts
43 Squirrel food
44 Most unrefined
45 Moroccan capital
46 "A Bell for __"
47 Electrical measure
50 Baseball squad
51 Military assistant
52 Designer St. Laurent
53 Went to the bottom
55 J. Edgar Hoover's org.
56 Craze

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

H	I	G	H	H	A	T	■	M	A	S	T	I	F	F
U	N	L	E	A	S	H	■	A	R	M	E	N	I	A
T	H	I	R	S	T	Y	■	S	L	A	N	D	E	R
C	O	M	E	H	O	M	E	T	O	R	O	O	S	T
H	U	P	■	■	R	E	N	E	■	T	R	O	T	H
E	S	S	E	N	■	S	O	R	T	S	■	R	A	E
S	E	E	D	E	H	■	S	E	A	■	U	S	S	R
■	■	■	I	D	E	A	■	D	I	P	S	■	■	■
R	A	T	E	■	A	P	E	■	L	I	E	G	E	S
A	C	E	■	A	M	O	C	O	■	A	R	O	M	A
T	H	U	L	E	■	S	H	U	T	■	■	F	U	N
R	E	T	U	R	N	T	O	T	H	E	F	O	L	D
A	S	O	C	I	A	L	■	L	I	T	E	R	A	L
C	O	N	C	A	V	E	■	A	N	N	E	T	T	E
E	N	S	I	L	E	S	■	W	E	A	T	H	E	R

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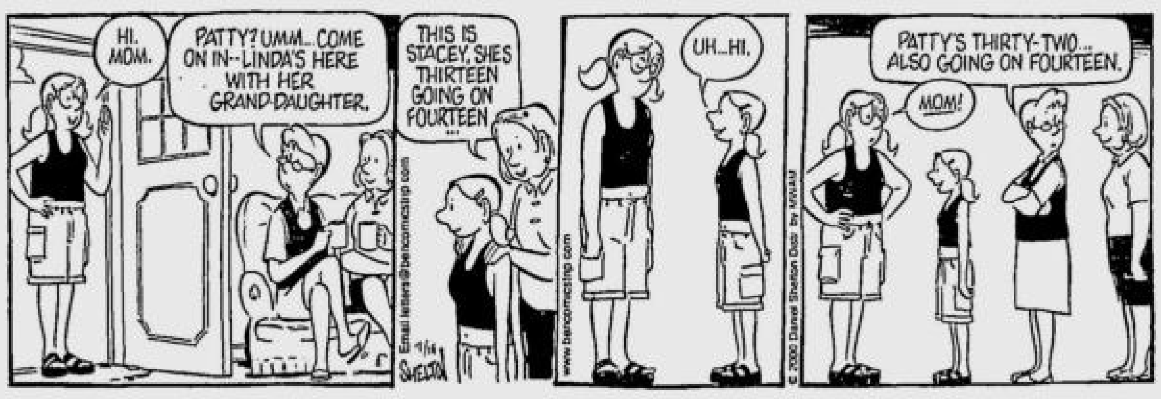
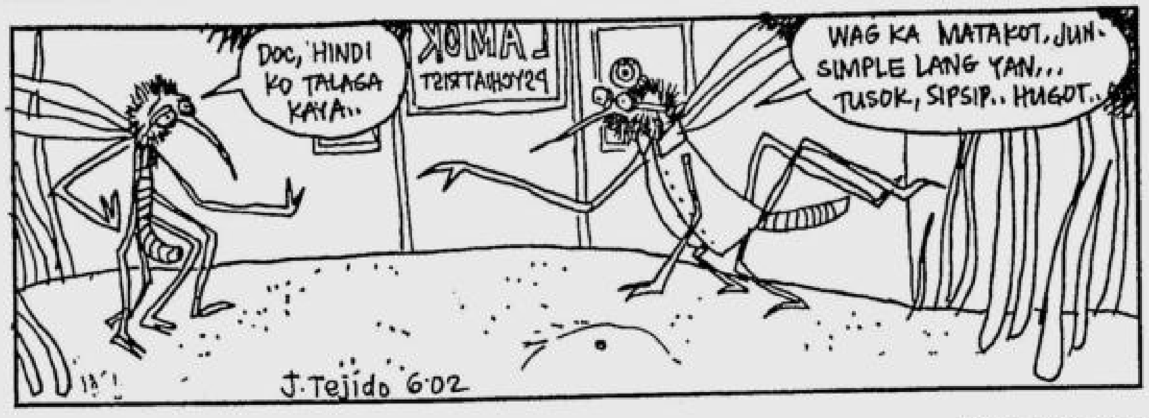
8/5/02

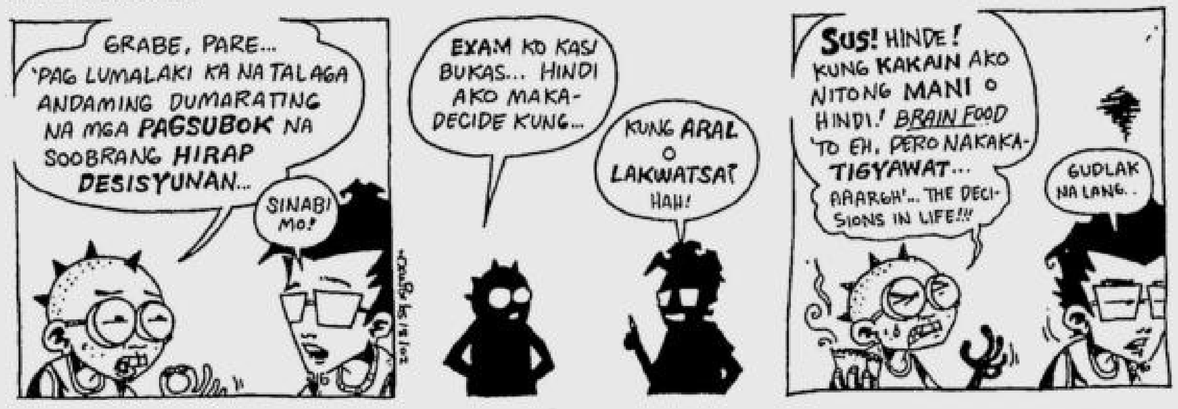
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


HI. MOM.
PATTY? UMM... COME ON IN--LINDA'S HERE WITH HER GRAND-DAUGHTER.
THIS IS STACEY. SHES THIRTEEN GOING ON FOURTEEN...
UH...HI.
PATTY'S THIRTY-TWO... ALSO GOING ON FOURTEEN.
MOM!
www.bencomicstrip.com
SHELTON

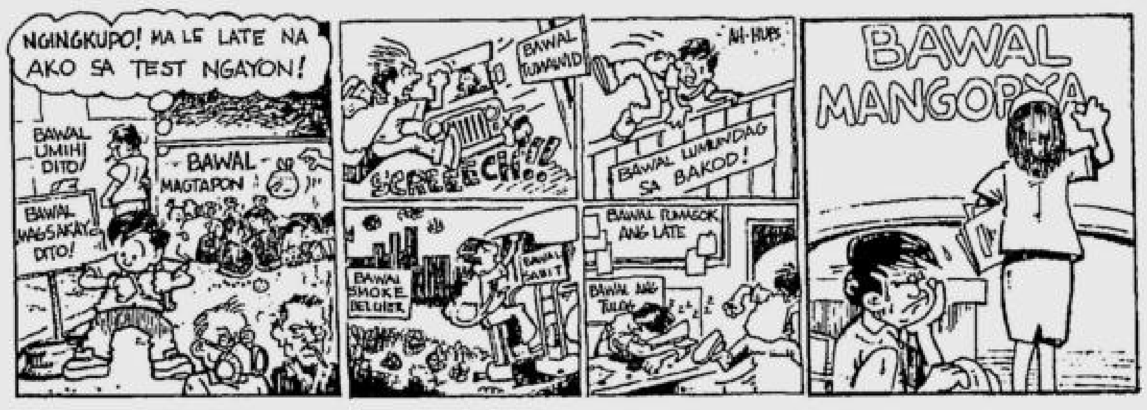
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DOC, HINDI KO TALAGA KAYA..
LAMOK PSYCHIATRIST
WAG KA MATAKOT, JUN. SIMPLE LANG YAN,.. TUSOK, SIPSIP.. HUGOT..
J.Tejido 6.02

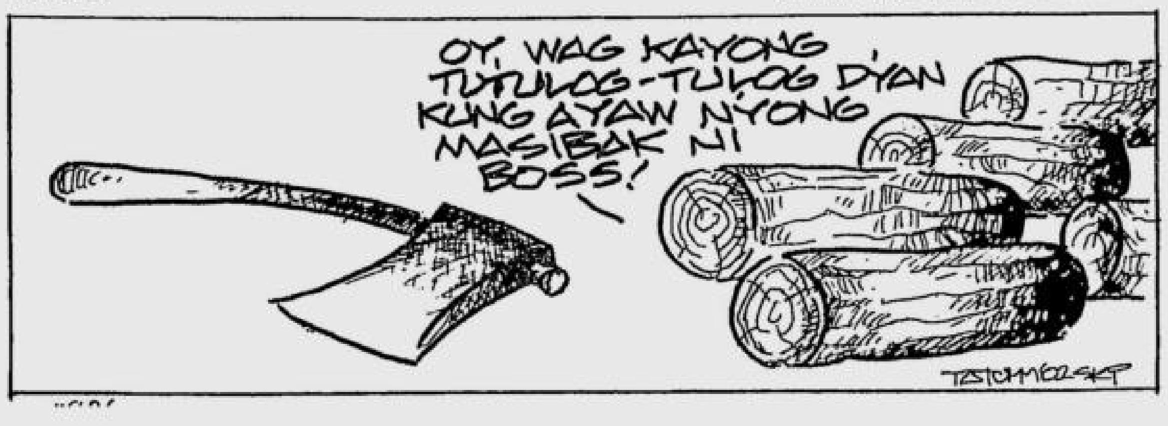
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE, PARE... 'PAG LUMALAKI KA NA TALAGA ANDAMING DUMARATING NA MGA PAGSUBOK NA SOOBRANG HIRAP DESISYUNAN...
SINABI MO!
EXAM KO KASI BUKAS... HINDI AKO MAKA-DECIDE KUNG...
KUNG ARAL O LAKWATSA? HAH!
SUS! HINDE! KUNG KAKAIN AKO NITONG MANI O HINDI! BRAIN FOOD 'TO EH. PERO NAKAKA-TIGYAWAT... AAARGH!.. THE DECISIONS IN LIFE!!!
GUDLAK NA LANG..

GENG'S GAMES
BY AMIEL RUFO

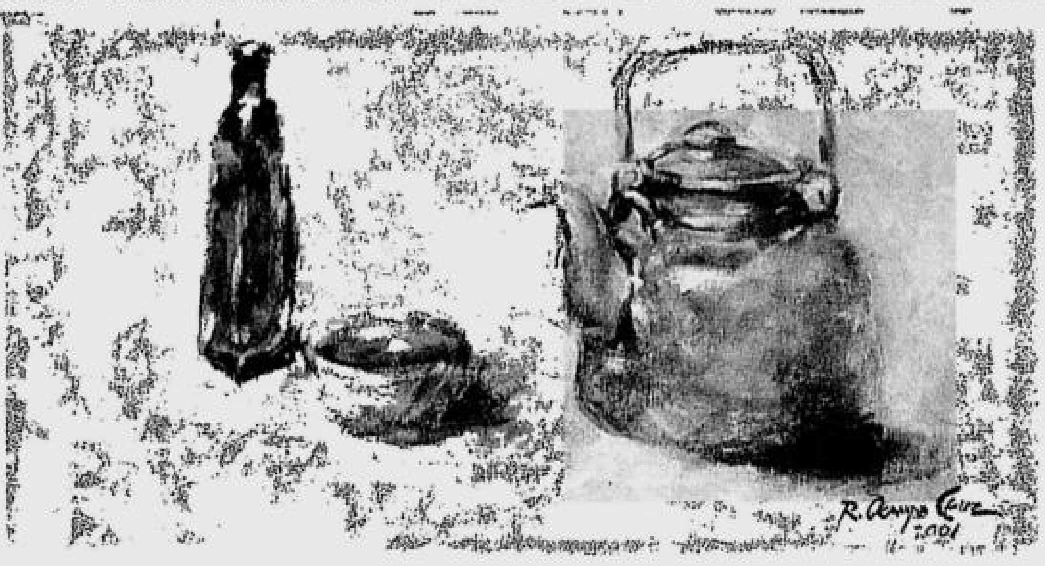

NGINGKUPO! MA LE LATE NA AKO SA TEST NGAYON!
BAWAL UMIHI DITO!
BAWAL MAGTAPON
BAWAL MAGSAKAY DITO!
BAWAL TUMAWID
SCREEECH!
AH-HUPS
BAWAL LUMUNDAG SA BAKOD!
BAWAL SMOKE BELCHER
BAWAL SABIT
BAWAL PUMASOK ANG LATE
BAWAL MAG TULOG
BAWAL MANGOPYA

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, WAG KAYONG TUTULOG-TULOG DYAN KUNG AYAW NYONG MASIBAK NI BOSS!

Still life, soft light

By Constantino C. Tejero



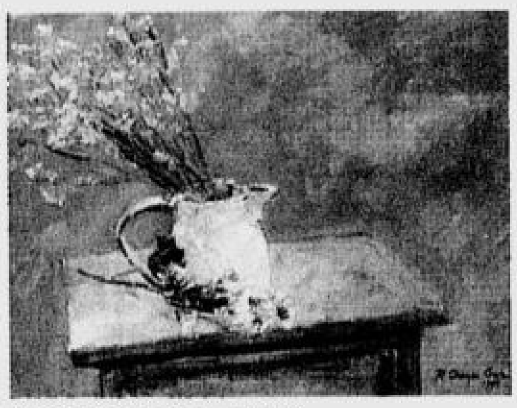
"SUNLIGHT at 8:00 AM"

THE STILL life has been abused by Mabini artists, that generic classification of Filipino painters who churn out gimcracks for foreign tourists. Their practice has further degraded this delicate genre so that on their canvas even an unusual object can appear stale.

A remarkable reversal can be found in R. Ocampo Cruz's still lifes, in which ordinary objects look new: a seashell, a kettle, a pitcher, a wine bottle, a kerosene lantern, fruits and flowers, the fronds of a *palmera*, the spears of an orchid. Quite pleasing to the eyes, they have nothing touristy about them. It is the artist's fresh rendering of the genre that makes each piece a poetic rendition.

This can be gleaned from "Impressions," an exhibit of 17 pieces in acrylic on canvas ongoing until Aug. 13 in The Crucible Gallery, 4/F SM Megamall A.

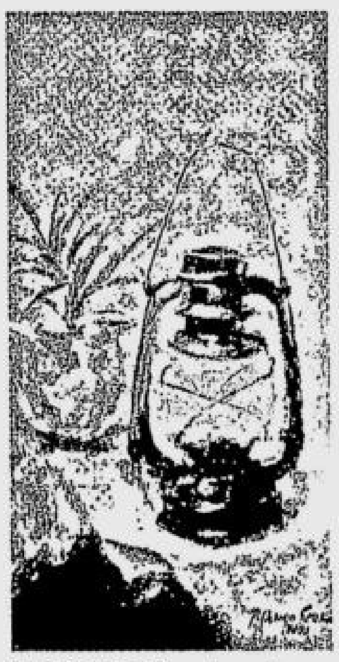
These pieces strike the viewer as being pastel-colored, of mauve, pink, soft yellow, even if the dominant hue used is of the deepest blue. The viewer gets the impression of soft light even if the canvas is awash in brilliant yellow, as in "Sunlight at 8:00 AM" and "Sunday Glaze." At times the light is so muted that "Calauan Summer" is not quite summer so much as the approach of winter or fall.



"AFTERNOON Sunlight"

Austere composition

Cruz's style and technique are rich in resonance, his brushstroke and coloration a blend of the French Impressionists and the Filipino Modernists. His composition is austere, even if he is showing showy flowers, the choice and arrangement of objects Zen-like, as in "Bountiful Harvest" and "Oriental Sunrise."



"PANDAN Symphony"

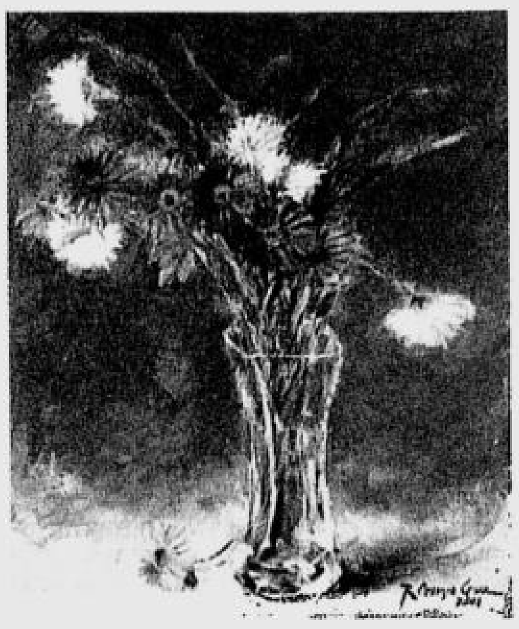
In "Pandan Symphony," the rigorous composition is there but never flaunted, but subtly observed, in the blue water jug on the background reflected by the blue kerosene lamp on the foreground, and in the subliminal image of a duck on the stout vessel reflecting the play of light on the glass of the lamp.

A similar austerity can be found in "Seasons of the Heart," which could have been cloying, given the title. Pieces with subjects and titles such as "April Bouquet" and "Morning Mist" could have also melted in a cloying wash, but one can see that Cruz is not a Hallmark artist.

The titles of these pieces are something else. They do not give away the object or explain its circumstance, but rather tease the viewer with its suggestion, thus enhancing or enriching the story behind the image.

Rich in suggestion

Curiosity is piqued in the viewer, for instance, about the story behind "Before the Party," which shows only white calla lilies in a tall glass vase and three greenish-yellow fruits against a wash of blue.



"12TH of June"

One can speculate on "Swept Away," that lonesome image of a gray seashell on the foaming shore against the blue of water or sky. Why is it alone?

A similar piece but in a completely different light (not to say, hue) is "Solitary Tulip," an asymmetrical composition against a wash of yellow showing a flame-red flower on long stalk in a silver pitcher both leaning diagonally across the canvas. Why is this flower alone?

One can make stories out of these austere compositions. In "Anniversary" (a green bottle of wine, a green apple and yellow lemons in a blue bowl), what are they celebrating? In "12th of June" (red and white daisies in a crystal vase, one mauve flower fallen), what happened that day?

Something that has not really been explored by many artists, least of all the Mabini type, is a still life's suggestiveness. This is one other aspect in which Cruz has enriched the genre, and stands above many an amateur artist.

Saturday Group at Shangri-La Plaza; Laya talks on BSP art collection

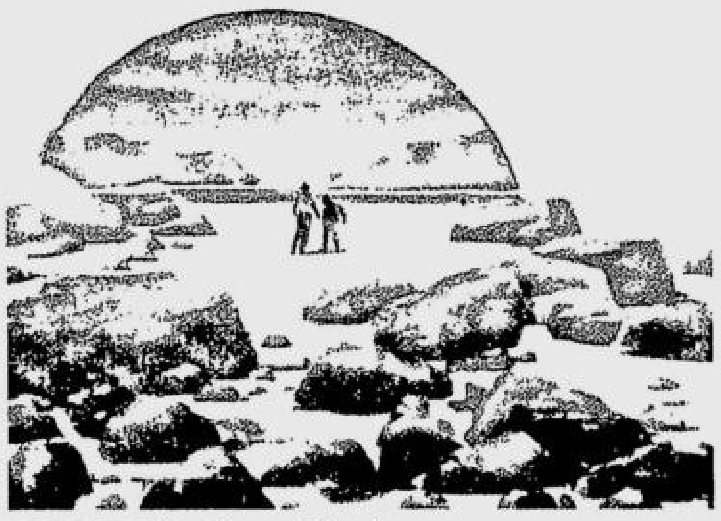
VISUAL ARTS

THE SATURDAY Group is showcasing its members' newest watercolor paintings on the 3/L Shangri-La Plaza. Dubbed "Tubig," the two-week sale-exhibit runs until Aug. 10. A must-see among art connoisseurs are the paintings of Malang, who unveils his masterpieces in watercolor, a medium he has not used since he won first place in the watercolor category of the Art Association of the Philippines painting contest in 1963. Other paintings to look forward to are masterpieces of veteran artists Magoo Valencia, Cris Cruz, Frank Caha, King Verano, Ben Infante. Call 633-7851 local 151.

DR. Jaime C. Laya, former Central Bank governor and chair of KPMG/ Laya, Maananhaya and Co., one of the Philippines' largest auditing and consulting firms, will deliver a talk on the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Painting Collection on Aug 10. Registration starts at 9 a.m. at the Galeriya ng Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Metropolitan Museum of Manila, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. Call 819-0046, 813-0771 or 842-0329.

ALFREDO Juan Aquilizan reveals another fundamental aspect of his art-making in "Paintings," featuring mixed-media works on canvas at the Galleria Duemila, 4/L SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City, Aug 6-30. The artist engages in free-flowing, expressionist abstractions of familiar objects, themes, textures and colors from the spaces where he works, lives and loves. Call 634-3261, 831-9990, 633-6687 or 833-9815.

THE ALCOVE features Marissa Espino's "Java: A Prayer in Stone," an exhibit that puts together two houses of prayer, two diverse religions, two concepts of spiritual revolution, yet coexisting on one mystical island, Java. In the exhibit, Espino lets the viewer's soul "journey" through the Buddhist temple of Borobudur and the Hindu shrines of the Prambanan. The Alcove, a pocket gallery dedicated to black-and-white photography, is in the Filipinas Heritage Library on Makati Avenue, Ayala Triangle, Makati City (across The Peninsula Manila). The exhibit runs until Aug. 23. Call 892-1801.



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PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

Manila toasts Peru's National Day with pisto sour

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

PERU celebrated its 181st National Day with Ambassador **Jorge Chavez Soto** hosting a well-attended reception at his residence.

The country's national drink, pisto sour, made from grapes, was greeted with enthusiasm by the guests, but Venezuelan Ambassador **Milena Ramirez** warned not to go over three glasses because it's deceptively sweet but potent. The Mayas and Incas had the right idea. They were either chewing coca leaves or sipping pisto sours because of the altitude, of course.

Although Mandarin Oriental catered, there were two typical Peruvian dishes included: spicy morsels of stewed chicken (Aji de Gallina) with sun-dried chilies, and Causa Limeña, a potato, avocado, black olives, shrimps and tuna salad. (Peru has more than 300 varieties of the tuber, and Spain introduced it to the West and to us as well!)

The news that the ruins of a lost Incan settlement have been discovered recently in Peru is certainly cause for celebration.

Among the guests at the Peruvian reception were Pakistan Ambassador **Hasan** and **Nelam Sarmad**, who happens to be an economist; Libyan Ambassador **Salem Adam**, British Ambassador **Paul** and **Carolyn Dimond**, Canadian Ambassador **Robert** and **Marilyn Collette**, **Mita** and **Tony Rufino**, **Bonjin Bolinao;** director-actor **Anton Juan,** fulminating against certain unjust practices of government agencies (more about that in three weeks, according to him); **Gemma Cruz Araneta**, who was off to romantic Mexico for two months (all she can take of romance, according to her); Swedish Ambassador **Ulf Hakansson** and **Lena Hakansson,** just back from home leave where they met up with former Danish Ambassador **Peter** and **Brigitta Posting**. More returnees were **Helen Ong** and **Tessie Luz**—back from an Alaskan cruise.

Former Ambassador to Spain **Isabel Wilson** was chic in red chiffon. She's running for the board of the Manila Polo Club and says the dirty politics is nothing but a reflection of the goings-on in our national life.

Just as chic were Chilean Ambassador **Carmen Lynam,** in gray silk, and **Norie Ongsiaco,** making a fashion statement with multiple strands of seed pearls.

* * *

CATHOLIC Women's Club, under the leadership of president **Lulu Castañeda** and her board, held its annual fund-raising tea at the ballroom of the Peninsula, this time with a Caribbean theme.

Chair of the event was **Thelma Gana**, who whipped up several Caribbean-inspired dance numbers by the ladies, choreographed by **Jeremy Vallejo.**

MITA Rufino and Anton Juan

US Ambassador Ricciardoni and Antonio Balmori Villegas

SWEDISH Ambassador Ulf and Mme. Lena Hakansson

BEN Farrales and Marilu Prieto Lovina

Winners of the best costumes were **Letty Syquia,** in rainbow stripes, and **Mellie Ablaza,** in yards and yards of white lace, both outfits by no less than Mang Ben; and **Norie Ongsiaco,** with a gorgeous headdress and colorful costume by the one and only fashion czar, **Pitoy**. **Boysie Villa-vicencio** took care of the judging and the rest of us agreed with him.

This year's blue-and-white Madonna Plate by artist **Dante Castillo** was also introduced. Orders may be placed with Violy at tel. 843-2869.

CHILEAN Ambassador Carmen Lynam, Brazil Charge d' Affaires Carlos Carvalho, Isabel Wilson and Peru embassy Second Secretary Wilbert Haya

CEZ Manalo, Luz Santos, Lulu Castañeda and Norie Ongsiaco

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